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FOUR NIETZSCHE LETTERS 3 *Walter Kaufmann*
AMERICA'S RACE PARADOX 9 *Nathan Glazer*
LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT (a story) 19 *William Sansom*
THE PROMETHEANS 22 *Melvin J. Lasky*

ART
DEATH OF THE NUDE 33 *Edward Lucie-Smith*

ARCHITECTURE
THE STONES OF EMPIRE 38 *James Morris*

POETRY
BEFORE THE DANCE 45 *Charles Tomlinson*
THE PRETTY DRUM AND THE JOLLY DRUMSTICK 46 *Nigel Dennis*
NIGHT TRAIN 47 *Hagiwara Sakutarō*

NOTES & TOPICS
OCTOBER FOR THE REBELS 48 *Michael Beloff*
WHITE LADY OR SHE-DEVIL? 56 *James Wellard*

BOOKS & WRITERS
ON SINCERITY 61 *Donald Davie*
HENRY LUCE'S LIFE & TIME 66 *T. S. Matthews*
GEORGE LICHTHEIM'S IDEOLOGY 70 *Maurice Cranston*
HEROES OF OUR TIME 74 *David Rees*
THE AGE OF GANDHI 76 *Francis Watson*

EAST & WEST
THE GREAT PURGE 80 *Robert Conquest*

LETTERS 92

AUTHORS 96

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Walter Kaufmann

Nietzsche

Four Unpublished Letters

NIETZSCHE'S life and character have probably excited more interest than those of any other philosopher. Thomas Mann drew inspiration from both for his *Doctor Faustus*, André Malraux embodied an episode from Nietzsche's life in *La lutte avec l'ange*, and Stefan George, Christian Morgenstern, and Gottfried Benn each wrote more than one poem about him.

Hence a good deal of attention has always been focused on Nietzsche's letters, although they contain scarcely any philosophy. The various German collections of the letters are spread over fifteen volumes, but many letters still await publication. In the following pages I want to illuminate Nietzsche's character with the help of four hitherto unpublished Nietzsche letters.

His finest letters are exceedingly personal. Many people write letters mainly in order to write, and then address them to someone almost as an afterthought. Nietzsche wrote into his notebooks when he wanted to try out ideas; when he succeeded in giving adequate form to his thoughts he put them into his books. His letters usually show a pervasive awareness of the person whom he is addressing and speak to *him*, not to the public or posterity. Hence many of Nietzsche's letters are of no great interest except to those who are concerned to establish some small point about his life; but *some* letters illuminate his relationships to others and show us vividly how he felt.

WALTER KAUFMANN *is the author of an edition of Nietzsche's* Will to Power, *with commentary, and a study of Hegel (both published by Weidenfeld & Nicolson. His* Tragedy and Philosophy *is to be published by Doubleday this autumn.*

OUR FIRST LETTER was addressed to Karl Hillebrand (1829–84), a scholar and literary critic to whom the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition, devoted half a column. He "became involved, as a student in Heidelberg, in the Baden revolutionary movement, and was imprisoned in Rastatt. He succeeded in escaping and lived for a time in Strassburg, Paris—where for several months he was Heine's secretary—and Bordeaux." He took a doctorate at the Sorbonne, became a professor at Douai, resigned his chair and went to Italy when the Franco-Prussian War broke out in 1870, and died in Florence. "His essays, collected under the title *Zeiten, Völker und Menschen* (Berlin, 1874–1885), show clear discernment, a finely balanced cosmopolitan judgment and grace of style." So far the *Encyclopaedia*. The collection mentioned includes three review-essays on Nietzsche's first three *Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen*—his earliest books, except for *The Birth of Tragedy*. Like most of Nietzsche's works, the "Untimely Meditations" met with very little response. Here is Nietzsche's letter to Hillebrand, written in April 1878:[1]

Hochverehrter Herr,

after a winter of severe illness, my health is waking up again and I am enjoying your four volumes *Völker, Zeiten und Menschen*, delighted as if they were milk and honey.

[1] The manuscript belongs to the Princeton University Library.

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> O books that exhale a *European* air and not nationalistic nitrogen! How good for the lungs! And then: I'd like to see the author who could equal your candour and benevolent sense of justice—or rather: I shall exert myself to discover all authors—but how few they'll be!—who come *close* to you in these great virtues.—How grateful I am to you for collecting these essays! Otherwise you might almost have escaped me, for I read neither newspapers nor magazines and altogether, living on the edge of blindness, read (and write) *very little*. This reminds me that you have spoken of my writings, too: of all the comments on them that have come to my notice, yours are the *only* ones that have truly delighted me. For here it is clearly *superiority* (in experience and taste and a few other things) that passes judgment, and if only he that is judged is no fool he will take sides *against himself* with genuine pleasure. And how gladly one *learns* from you!
>
> Cordially grateful and devoted,
>
> Dr. Friedrich Nietzsche
>
> *University of Basel, Switzerland*
>
> Don't take amiss a philologist's pedantry: it is *das Sophisma*, not *der Sophismus*—please forgive me!

Our second letter was written five-and-a-half years later, after Nietzsche had finished the third part of *Zarathustra* (which appeared in 1883) and before he wrote the fourth part the following winter in Nice and Mentone. He sent the letter from Mentone in late November 1883, to Paul Lanzky. In 1884, only forty copies of *Zarathustra* IV were printed, privately, but no more than seven were actually distributed among friends. Lanzky got one of the seven; so did Carl Fuchs, to whom the last of these four letters was written.

Since Lanzky was one of the few who were close to Nietzsche during his last creative years, it is not surprising that Nietzsche mentioned him in five of his letters to Peter Gast, in nine to Franz Overbeck, and in sixteen to his mother and sister, not counting three with which the sister tampered before publishing them. While it has thus long been possible to reconstruct Nietzsche's relation to Lanzky by turning to these three published collections, not one of Nietzsche's letters to Lanzky has been published, and the comprehensive survey of Nietzsche's known letters in the first volume of the *Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe* of the letters (1938) indicates that the Nietzsche Archive in Weimar owned only three *drafts* for letters and one draft for a postcard to Lanzky.

On 26 December 1883 Franz Overbeck received a letter from Nietzsche which contains this passage:

> There is a new human being who may have been given to me at the right time: his name is Paul Lanzky, and he is so devoted to me that he would like to tie his destiny to mine as soon as possible. Independent and a friend of solitude and simplicity, 31 years old, with a philosophical disposition, even more of a pessimist than a sceptic—he is the first to address me in his letters as *Verehrtester Meister!* (which aroused the most diverse feelings and memories)....[2]

Nietzsche was then thirty-nine, and earlier that year Richard Wagner had died, whom his admirers had been in the habit of calling *Meister*.

In November 1884 Nietzsche wrote his mother and sister from Mentone:

> Imagine: meanwhile Herr Lanzky waited for me one whole week in the *Pension de Genève* (Nizza); I heard about it two days too late. Then he left for Ajaccio. A touching letter from him reached me today.[3]

A few days later, 28 November, Nietzsche wrote them:

> After my last card, until today, a severe attack. Today exhausted.—The Corsican affair is settled: Herr Lanzky will come back from there and spend the winter with me in the same *Pension*. (The result of letters and telegrams.) I will and must stick to Nizza for the sake of my future "colony," which now seems more possible to me (I mean: sympathetic people to whom I can present my philosophy). So alone as I have been here or in the Engadine, I am always sick.

Our hitherto unpublished letter is evidently one of the letters Nietzsche mentions here. The manuscript[4] comprises three small pages, written very neatly:

> *Mein lieber Herr Lanzky,*
>
> *Malheur!* You have left a couple of days too early—but that you have come to Nizza

[2] *Cf.* the letters to mother and sister, 25 Dec. 1883, and to Gast, 5 March 1884.

[3] Nietzsche's sister seems to have tampered with the first part of this letter but not with this paragraph. (See *Werke*, ed. Schlechta, vol. III, p. 1417.)

[4] Owned by the author.

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pleases me greatly, and I might even carry my gratitude so far as to come to Corsica now. Send me, immediately, if that is possible, a few details about the How and Where in Ajaccio—addressed here, Mentone, *pension des Etrangers*.

I am not well just now; but walking bravely and making plans for the future of man shall get me over that. Not counting a few attacks of impatience and rudeness.

Again: I feel *cordially* delighted to have heard from you again.

Yours faithfully,

DR. FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE
Prof.

N.B.—Give it a try and come to the pier Sunday morning, Nov. 30: perhaps I'll be *there*.

NIETZSCHE

That is the author of *Zarathustra*, about to write the fourth and last part. A few passages from the later letters about Lanzky may round out the picture. December 1884, Nietzsche wrote to his mother and sister:

> Herr L. . . . came back immediately when I telegraphed him: *Venez pour Nice. Votre ami N.* He telegraphed back: *Je serai à Nice mercredi. Votre bien heureux Lanzky.* —He has some notion who I am. On the whole, however, to say it in French: *il m'ôte la solitude, sans me donner la compagnie.*—So nothing will come of *Zarath. IV* this winter.

On 21 December, Nietzsche wrote to his mother and sister:

> Lanzky is not cheerful enough for me. But he takes a lot of trouble and bears with me though occasionally I cannot bear things any longer without becoming rude. . . .
>
> Please send me, for Lanzky's sake, Rohde's pamphlet about *The Birth of Tragedy* (bound in brown leather). . . .
>
> I am sending you an essay Lanzky has written about me, not that I feel like praising it but only because it is the first longish essay about me. That it appeared in a provincial Hungarian journal is another example of the stupidity and clumsiness of my publisher.

The following day Nietzsche wrote Overbeck:

> Then Herr Paul Lanzky lives in my *pension*, a great admirer: formerly editor of the *Rivista Europea*, thus *in summa* a journalist. But yesterday when he gave me a long essay about me (printed in a Hungarian journal!), I had no choice but to do what I had done last year with Dr. Paneth,[5] also a great admirer and worshipper: namely, to oblige him not to write about me. I do not have the least wish to see a new kind of Nohl, Pohl and "Kohl"[6] sprout up around me—and prefer my absolute concealment a thousand times to being together with mediocre enthusiasts.

The following month, Nietzsche wrote Overbeck in the same vein: "Lanzky, a considerate man who is very devoted to me, but not somebody to be together with for a long time. I'd prefer even a buffoon!" And 12 February 1885, he wrote to his mother and sister:

> Tomorrow Herr Lanzky leaves me, a very decent man who nevertheless impressed on me again the value and necessity of solitude for me. I shall be careful not to lose another winter in this way. To be sure, I have every reason to be very grateful to him for many signs of good will and consideration; but one thing is a hundred times more important to me than anything else.

A week later, Nietzsche expressed similar ideas to Overbeck:

> I have been through a lot; having the very decent Lanzky here (who will leave next Mon-

[5] About Dr. Paneth, who in 1884 wrote his friend, Sigmund Freud, a lot about Nietzsche, see my *From Shakespeare to Existentialism* (1959), Chapter 16, section 3.

[6] K. F. L. Nohl and R. Pohl were ardent Wagnerians who wrote a great deal about their master; *Kohl* means drivel or twaddle as well as cabbage. The same unholy trinity is encountered in *Ecce Homo*, in sec. 2 of the discussion of *Human, All-too-human*. For further details see my commentary on that passage in my edition of *Ecce Homo*.

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day) has helped me over a good deal. But on the other side of this account I might say that I have learned how much I still need complete solitude for a good long while (say, five years!). There is too much in me that still wants to grow ripe and come together; the time for "disciples and a school" *et hoc genus omne* has not come yet.

On 21 March 1885, Nietzsche wrote to his mother and sister:

> You see, I am more cheerful again; the most essential fact is probably that Herr Lanzky is gone. A man who deserves the greatest respect and very devoted to me—but what do these two things matter to me? To me he means what I call by such names as "overcast" or "German weather." In fact, nobody now living means a great deal to me; the human beings I like have been dead for a long, long time; *e.g.*, Abbé Galiani or Henri Beyle or Montaigne.

The following November *Zarathustra*, Part IV, was completed and privately printed, and Nietzsche wrote his mother from Florence:

> The day after tomorrow we (*i.e.*, Herr Lanzky and I) retreat into the wood-, mountain-, and cloister-solitude of Vallombrosa, not at all far from here. The best room is being prepared for me; we'll have quiet; the place is famous: Dante and Milton have glorified it, the latter in his description of paradise.

In December Nietzsche wrote Overbeck that he was once again "experimenting with places to live":

> It must be possible eventually to find something independent and suitable for me; but I doubt more and more that I'll find it. Hence I need people who look after me. The unpractical side of my nature, being half blind, and on the other hand being anxious, helpless, discouraged as a consequence of my ill health, often freezes me in situations that almost kill me.
>
> Almost seven years of solitude and for the most part truly a dog's life because I lacked everything necessary for *me*. I thank heaven that nobody has really witnessed it at close range (except Lanzky who is still utterly beside himself about it).

On 9 January 1886, Nietzsche wrote Overbeck:

> I have every reason to be grateful that a man like L., a remarkably noble and fine character, albeit unfortunately no "intellect"—crossed my path: in the long run he will probably become something like my "practical reason," my counsel for home economics, health, etc.

Finally, Nietzsche wrote Gast on 9 December 1888, less than a month before his total collapse, that he had finished his final revision of *Ecce Homo*, and

> The day before yesterday, Strindberg wrote me his first letter—the first letter with a world-historical accent ever to reach me. He has some idea that *Zarathustra* is a *non plus ultra*.

Nietzsche felt elated. He had also received a letter from a female admirer in St. Petersburg; Georg Brandes was lecturing about him in Copenhagen; Nietzsche had just sent *Twilight of the Idols* to Hippolyte Taine and hoped for a French translation; perhaps Miss Helen Zimmern would do some English translations (she actually did translate *Beyond Good and Evil* later on); and eventually Lanzky is mentioned again:

> Dear friend, I want to get back all copies of the fourth part of *Zarathustra* in order to secure this *ineditum* against all accidents of life and death (I read it recently and almost died of emotion). If I publish it after a few decades of world-historical crises—wars!—only then will the right time have come. Please strain your memory to determine who has copies. My memory yields: Lanzky, Widemann, Fuchs, Brandes, probably Overbeck.

This final reference to Paul Lanzky may give some idea of Nietzsche's solitude during his last years. Paul Heinrich Widemann was a young composer and friend of Gast's. Brandes had discovered Nietzsche and corresponded with him, but they never met.

BEFORE WE TURN to Fuchs, let us consider the third of our four unpublished letters. This was addressed to Nietzsche's publisher, E. W. Fritzsch:[7]

Sils Maria, Oberengadin, Switzerland,
29 Aug. 86

Lieber und werther Herr Fritzsch,

Here is the preface for the *new* edition of *The Birth of Tragedy*. Given this very meaty preface which provides so much orientation, you can launch this book once more—it even seems very important to me that this should be done. All signs indicate that during the

[7] The manuscript belongs to the Houghton Library, Harvard University. The postscripts are written on the margins.

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next years people will pay a good deal of attention to my books (inasmuch as I am, if I may say so, by far the most independent thinker of this time who thinks in the great style more than anyone else); people will *need* me and make all kinds of efforts to get at me, to understand and "explain" me, etc. To forestall the worst mistakes, nothing seems more useful to me (apart from *Beyond Good and Evil,* which has just appeared) than the *two* prefaces I took the liberty of sending you: they indicate the way I went—and, quite seriously, if I myself do not offer a couple of hints how I am to be understood, the worst stupidities are bound to happen.

I cannot judge to what extent it might be advisable or inadvisable commercially and from a publisher's point of view to bring upon the market simultaneously several books by the same author. What is essential is that as a prerequisite for the understanding of my *Zarathustra* (an unparalleled event in literature *and* philosophy *and* poetry *and* morality, etc., etc. You may believe me, you lucky owner of this *Wundertier!*) all of my earlier writings must be understood seriously and profoundly; ditto, the necessity of the sequence of these writings and of the development that finds expression in them. Perhaps it would be equally useful to issue now, immediately, the new edition of *The Birth* as well (with the "Attempt at a Self-Criticism"). This "Attempt," together with the "Preface to *Human, All-too-human,*" provides genuine enlightenment about me—and the very best preparation for my audacious son, Zarathustra.

In December I hope to be able to continue with the prefaces—in Nizza where so far I have never lacked courage and inspiration around that time of year. Namely, *Hum., All-too-hum.*, second volume (comprising *Mixed Opin. and Maxims* and *The Wanderer*), 2. *Dawn,* 3. *Gay Science.*

I think you know, my dear Herr Publisher, how much courage and inspiration is required precisely for such prefaces? and in addition even more "good will"—

Let us assume that by next spring all my works, insofar as they are in your hands, will be ready for another flight with new "wings." For these prefaces shall be *wings!* (Only the 4 *Untimely Medit.* I want to leave as they stand: that is why I have considered it necessary to call attention to them very definitely in the postscript that I sent you recently for the preface to *Hum., All-too-hum.* Hoping for a brief reply to this address.

Your most devoted,

Dr. Nietzsche,
Prof.

Please be good enough to tell me something about the prices of the books that are to appear next. Hermann Credner[8] once told or wrote me that Schmeitzner's prices had been the greatest obstacle on my way to date.

A separate little volume of nothing but prefaces would be a sin against good taste. The dreadful little preface-word "I" is tolerated only on condition that it is not encountered in the book that follows: it is justified only in a preface.

Sep. 1: Just now letter and proofs arrived. Has the postscript (sent to you by registered mail) not reached you yet? Lest everything be delayed, I ask you to drop it (not to print it). But this "Self-Criticism" more than ever.

This letter does not need to be placed in the context of other letters. Nietzsche's works were duly reissued with his new prefaces, and that for the new edition of *The Birth of Tragedy* is a masterpiece. So far from singing his own praises, the self-criticism leaves nothing to be desired in sharpness; perhaps no other great writer has ever dealt so harshly with one of his own works in a preface.

Eventually, in *Ecce Homo,* Nietzsche did commit the sin against good taste of which he writes here. The reviews of his own books in that work are assembled under the chapter heading "Why I Write Such Good Books"—but are redeemed by an abundance of insight and wit.

Our fourth unpublished letter is addressed to Dr. Carl Fuchs in Danzig. Fuchs (1838–1922) received his doctorate at Greifswald with a dissertation entitled *Präliminarien zu einer Kritik der Tonkunst* (1870, "Prolegomena for a Critique of Music"). He was a concert pianist and conductor before he became organist at the Petrikirche in Danzig and from 1887 until 1920 also music critic of the *Danziger Zeitung.* For many years he also served as organist for the synagogue, but according to the *vita* appended to his dissertation he was a Protestant (and his mother's maiden name was Stechert). He published several books on music and in 1904 received the title of pro-

[8] A publisher in Leipzig, discussed in a letter to Overbeck, 20 July 1888.

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fessor. Some of Nietzsche's letters to him were printed in *Gesammelte Briefe*, vol. 1 (1900), but this letter fills an interesting gap in our knowledge of Nietzsche. On 20 July 1888, Nietzsche wrote Overbeck:

> Dear friend, nothing has improved, neither the weather nor my health—both remain *absurd*. But today I'll tell you of something that is still more absurd; Dr. Fuchs. Recently he has sent me a whole literature (including one letter of twelve large crowded sheets!). In the process I have slowly turned into a hedgehog, and my old mistrust is complete again. His egoism is so clever and on the other hand so anxious and unfree that nothing avails him—neither his great talent nor the fact that there is a lot in his nature that is *genuinely* artistic.

The account of Fuchs is long and detailed; all of it was omitted when the letter was printed in *Friedrich Nietzsches Briefwechsel mit Franz Overbeck* (1916)—the omission was indicated, but there was no way of telling how very long it was. Now, however, the German text is readily accessible in the third volume of Schlechta's edition of the *Werke* (pp. 1302ff). It will suffice here to cite the end of Nietzsche's comments on Fuchs.

> He is also the organist at the synagogue in Danzig. You may imagine how he made fun of the Jewish services in the *dirtiest* way (but he allows himself to be *paid* for it!!).
>
> Finally, he wrote me a letter about his *descent*, with so many disgusting and indecent indiscretions about his mother and his father that I lost my patience and in the rudest manner forbade him to send me such letters. I am not in the least inclined to allow my solitude to be disturbed by the contingency of letters.—So far have we come. Unfortunately I know this kind of man too well to be able to hope that this will be the end.

Schlechta does not include in his selection Nietzsche's postcard to Overbeck, 26 July 1888, which was printed in 1916 and begins: "Dear friend, another word regarding Dr. F. He has meanwhile answered my letter—excellently, not merely cleverly."

The very next day Nietzsche wrote Gast to send Fuchs a copy of Part IV of *Zarathustra*, and on the 29th he informed Fuchs of this, "as a sign that everything between us is all right again."

Here is the letter Nietzsche mentioned to Overbeck—calling it a sample of his rudest manner:[9]

***Wednesday, July* 18, 1888**

Lieber Herr Doctor,

Don't feel annoyed, but from sheer necessity I must resist your letter. It is altogether forbidden to me to hear such *privatissima, personalissima*: their effect on me is, I dare not say what—it would sound too medical. For just a moment put yourself into the place of one who has my *Zarathustra* on his soul. Once you have comprehended what exertion it has cost me to gain some sort of equilibrium vis-à-vis the whole fact of man you will also comprehend the extreme caution with which I now approach all human intercourse. I want once and for all not to know many things any more, never to hear many things any more—at this price I may perhaps endure.

I have given men the most profound book they own, my *Zarathustra*: a book that confers such distinction that whoever can say, "I have understood six sentences in it, that is lived through them" thus belongs to a higher order of mortals.—But how one has to atone for that! pay for that! it almost corrupts one's character! The gulf has become too great. Ever since, I really do nothing any more but buffooneries to remain master over an intolerable tension and vulnerability.

This between us. The rest is silence.

Your friend,

NIETZSCHE.

[9] Owned by the author.

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Nathan Glazer

America's Race Paradox

The Gap between Social Progress & Political Despair

SOMETHING very strange is happening in the racial crisis in the United States. On the one hand, the concrete situation of Negro Americans is changing rapidly for the better. This is not only true when we look at economic measures of all kinds (although we all know that these are an inadequate measure of group progress, and that a people that feels oppressed will never be satisfied by the argument "you never had it so good"); but it is also true that things are better when we look at measures of political participation and power. It is even true when we look at the critical area of police behaviour and police attitudes. There is no question that police in city after city are becoming more careful in how they address Negro Americans, more restrained in the use of force, of fire-arms. The history of the riots alone, from 1964, demonstrates that.

But on the other hand, the political attitudes of Negroes have become more extreme and more desperate. The riots are called "rebellions," and hardly any Negro leader today bothers to deplore them. Militant groups become larger, and their language and demands more shocking. Cultural nationalism flourishes —and I think most people think that is good— but political separatism becomes an ever more popular demand, and hardly anyone can consider that without thinking again. (We all know what may happen when a country begins to break up. Look at Nigeria.)

This is an incredible dilemma for social policy. For the fact is that most of us—black and white, liberals and conservatives, socialists and free enterprisers—believe (*1*) that political and social attitudes reflect the concrete economic and social and political situation of people; (*2*) that we can affect those attitudes by changing the concrete conditions; and (*3*) that when things get better people become more satisfied, less violent, the society becomes more stable. When concrete conditions improve and political attitudes become at the same time more extreme and violent, we can resort to two explanations.

There is the well-known "revolution of rising expectations," and the ease with which expectations can outstrip concrete positive changes. And there is the theory of Alexis de Tocqueville, developed in his study of the French Revolution, that the improvement of conditions increases the desire for greater change and for revolutionary change, because people themselves feel stronger and more potent. Both of these processes are undoubtedly taking place, but one's attitude to them must depend on one's attitude to American society. If one looks upon American society as Tocqueville and the French people looked upon their Old Régime, that is, as a conservative, sclerotic, repressive, irrational, and selfish régime which prevented the free development of the people, then one of course will accept favourably the rise of extreme opinion, and look forward to the crash of the American Old Régime. But if one sees American society and state as fundamentally democratic, as capable of change, as responsive to people's

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wishes—then one will be deeply concerned whether this society and state can survive. That expectations should rise is good—that they should rise so fast that no policy of any type carried out by anybody can satisfy them, is bad. That people should feel potent and powerful and free to express their resentments and anger is encouraging—that that resentment and anger should serve to overthrow a system that works, that is capable of satisfying their needs and hopes, is deplorable.

A rapid rate of social change has improved the condition of Negro Americans and has gone some way to closing gaps between the condition of Negro and white Americans, but it has not only *not* moderated the rise of extremism and violence—it has been accompanied by it. At some point one must expect improvement and change to moderate extremism and violence, despite the revolution of rising expectations and the Tocquevillean hypothesis. If there is such a point, it is clear we are not only not arriving at it: we are getting further and further away from it.

There is, of course, another possible explanation of what is happening: that Negro Americans are no longer interested in Integration or even in educational, economic, and political advance within the American social system. They have begun to see themselves as "a subject people" and, as in the case of every such people, only independent political existence can satisfy them. This, in any case, is the direction that militant Negro demands have now begun to take. And if most Negro Americans follow the militant leaders, then all the political skill, ingenuity, and creativity the American nation possesses will be necessary to keep it from being torn apart.

FIRST, LET ME BRIEFLY DOCUMENT the fact that things *are* getting better. We must do this because so many liberal and progressive shapers of opinion, and the vast flock that follows them, are convinced (and *insist*) that the concrete situation of Negro Americans has *not* changed, or has indeed got worse. Sadly enough, social scientists, who should know the facts best, are often among the worst offenders. The writer of that fine study of Negro street-corner men, *Tally's Corner*, for example, states casually that "the number of the poor and their problems have grown steadily since World War II. . . ." Social scientists who contend that the economic situation of Negroes is getting worse will point to the rising *absolute* gap between Negro and white incomes and ignore the fact that Negro incomes have come closer to white incomes as a *percentage* of white incomes. By this logic, if we come to a fortunate time when white median incomes are $10,000 and non-white median incomes are $8,000, it could be argued that Negroes are "worse off" than when whites made $5,000 and Negroes $3,500!

In October 1967, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of the Census put out a compendium of statistics on the *Social and Economic Conditions of Negroes in the United States*. Here are some of the major findings:

Income: In 1966, 23% of non-white families had incomes of more than $7,000, against 53% of white families. Ten years before, using dollars of the same value, only 9% of the non-white families had incomes at this level, against 31% of white families.

If we look at the U.S. outside the South, where the Negro situation on all measures is worst, we find in 1966 38% of non-white families with income above $7,000, against 59% of white families at that level.

Occupation: Between 1960 and 1966, the number of non-whites in the better-paying and more secure occupational categories increased faster than whites: a 50% increase for non-whites in professional, technical and managerial work, against a 13% increase for whites; a 48% increase in clerical occupations, against a 19% increase for whites; a 32% increase in sales workers, against a 7% increase for whites; a 45% increase in craftsmen and foremen, against a 10% increase for whites. And during the same time, the proportions of non-whites working as private household workers and labourers dropped.

Education: In 1960 there was a 1.9 years gap in median years of school completed between non-white and white males over 25; by 1966, there was only a .5 years gap.

In 1960, 36% of non-white males over 25 had completed high school, against 63% of white males; by 1966, 53% of non-white males had completed high school, against 73% of white males.

In 1960, 3.9% of Negro males had completed college, against 15.7% of white males; in 1966, 7.4% of Negro males had completed college,

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against 17.9% of white males—a 90% increase among non-white college graduates, against a 14% increase in white college graduates.

Housing: Beween 1960 and 1966, there was a 25% drop in the number of substandard housing units occupied by non-whites (from 2,263,000 to 1,691,000 units), and a 44% increase in the number of standard units occupied by non-whites—from 2,881,000 to 4,135,000 units.

If we look at political participation—voting, offices held, in effect, political power—we find an equally striking increase. Thus, Negro voter registration in the South increased from 2,164,000 in March 1964 to 3,072,000 in May 1968, while Negro population remained stable. The National Commission on Civil Disorders surveyed twenty cities to find out the extent of Negro political representation. The cities averaged 16% in Negro population; 10% in proportion of elected Negro political representatives. We have to interpret such a figure in the light of the fact that Negroes of voting age are generally a smaller proportion of the total Negro population in most cities than whites of voting age of the white population, since Negroes in cities have a higher proportion of young families and children, whites a higher proportion of the aged.

Even on that sorest point of black-white relations, the police, the Kerner Commission reports progress in one significant respect: there are now substantial numbers of Negroes on many city police forces—Washington 21%, Philadelphia 20, Chicago 17, St. Louis 11, Hartford 11, Newark 10, Atlanta 10, Cleveland 7, New York 5, Detroit 5.

These are simply overall measures. When one considers the large number of programmes devoted to getting Negroes into colleges, into graduate and professional schools, into various corporations, to raise their grades in the Federal Civil Service, to moderate police attitudes—and when one considers the incentives to do all these things to be found in riot and threat of riot, boycott and threat of boycott, one cannot help conclude that the situation of Negroes is changing... for "the better."

To be sure, all the figures I have quoted can be disputed. Thus, 14% of Negro males as against only 2% of white males (we have recently become aware) never get counted by the census; and if they were counted, they would undoubtedly depress the Negro figures on income, education, occupation, housing. But as against this, it must be pointed out that we have probably not been counting similar proportions of Negro males of working age in earlier censuses; so the change from one census to another represents real change.

It can be argued that the quality of jobs held by Negroes, even if they are in white-collar and skilled labour categories, is worse than that held by whites; and this too is true. But the changes over time are real, and the quality of jobs has certainly not on the whole decreased. Indeed, it has probably improved. Less Negro professionals today are preachers, more are engineers.

It can be argued that the improvement in the economic and educational and housing condition of the Negro is largely an effect of their migration from the South, and from small town and rural areas, to the North and West, and to big cities; if we were to look at Negroes in the North and West alone, we would not find such marked changes. But the statistics show improvement in every section.

It has been argued that while these overall measures of improvement truly reflect improvement for the Negro middle classes and stable working classes, the lower working classes have relatively declined, and have shown no progress. But an unpublished analysis of income statistics by Dr. Albert Wohlstetter (of the University of Chicago) reveals that the *lower* Negro income groups have improved their position relatively to white low-income groups more in recent years than the Negro upper-income groups have improved their position relative to white upper-income groups. In other words, the gap between poor Negroes and poor whites in terms of income is narrower now than in the 1950s. At the same time it is true that other social indicators —*e.g.*, the proportion of broken families and of illegitimacy—continue to reveal worsening conditions.

Finally, one may argue that much of the advance to which I have pointed has taken place since the Viet Nam War expanded in 1965, just as the previous economic advances of the Negro took place during the Korean War, and came to an end when that war came to an end. Between the wars there was relative decline and stagnation.

There is much truth in these last two arguments with the gross statistics of recent improvement. But it is also true that the advances made

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during wars have not been fully wiped out in the past—it is rather that the rate of change has not kept up. By now the build-up of Negro political power and of national programmes and commitments that guarantee advance is so great and the scale of the advances that have taken place in recent years is so massive, that I cannot believe they will not continue after the war—if, that is, there is not a radical change in the political situation to reverse the social and economic trends of the last eight years.

MORE STRIKING, however, than the advance itself is the fact that on the basis of our present social statistics we can not single out the Negro as a group in the United States which suffers unique deprivation, *i.e.*, as compared to other ethnic and racial groups which suffer from the effects of poor education, depressed rural backgrounds, and recent migration to urban areas. There has been a division among American social scientists as to how to view Negro Americans in the context of the ethnic and racial history of the United States. One tendency is to emphasise everything that is "unique"—and a great deal is unique: the manner of their arrival (by force, and in chains); the conditions under which they lived for two hundred years (slavery); the conditions under which they have lived for the last hundred years (legal inferiority in a good part of the country); finally, the special role of the Negro Americans in American imagination and in culture (as central participants in shaping it, and as the subjects of some of its major themes). But it is also possible to see Negro Americans as part of a sequence of ethnic and racial groups that have moved into American society and become a part of it.

A new illusion is now abroad in the land. It asserts that all white ethnic groups have rapidly moved into American society, achieving respectable levels of income, good conditions of living, and political power. All racially distinct groups, suffering from the racism of American society, have been held back; and the Negro American, suffering from the special character of chattel slavery, is furthest back. The truth is nothing like this. Some white ethnic groups—such as the Jews—have shown a rapid economic mobility. Others have been much slower to achieve economically. One of these economically-backward white ethnic groups, the Irish, has been politically gifted, and members of the group are to be found disproportionately among elected officials of every level and in almost every part of the country. Others, such as Italians and Poles, have done poorly both economically *and* politically. Some racially distinct groups—such as the Japanese—have done remarkably well in education and occupation. Most others have done badly.

The range in experience is enormous, and the cause of this difference is not only degree of discrimination and prejudice, though that is an important factor. Equally important is a whole range of elements we vaguely group under the term "culture"—attitudes and behaviour in connection with School, Work, Family. (These have their origin in history and it may well be that the discrimination and prejudice of the past creates the cultural attributes of the present.) Nor is it true that these grossly different patterns of achievement among different groups are to be found in the U.S.A. alone. They are to be found wherever different ethnic and racial groups live together, whether it is Malays, Chinese, and Indians in Malaya, or Indians and Africans in Kenya, or Chinese and Indonesians in Indonesia, or Maharashtrians and Gujaratis and South Indians in Bombay, *etc.* Indeed, it is often the case that when a group is politically favoured in terms of educational and job opportunities—*e.g.*, the Malays in Malaya—these powerful cultural factors prevent the group from taking full advantage of these opportunities; and they remain at a lower educational and economic level. The Negro situation is rather more complex than the gross simplification of having "started at the bottom and staying there." By some measures, the Puerto Ricans do worse in New York, and the Mexican Americans do worse in the South-west. One can indeed contend that the Negro is worst off of the major ethnic and racial groups in this country, but not that much worse off to explain by itself the special quality of despair and hysteria, and the tone of impending violence and doom that now dominates much Negro political discourse.

But of course we must add another factor to the equation: America's obligation as a nation to improve the position of Negroes is much greater than the obligation to groups that emigrated voluntarily. The Negro is aware of this obligation and responsibility, and so the inferiority of his position becomes far more grating than it would be in the case of ordinary immigrants.

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THE FACT IS THAT, regardless of the details of the actual economic and social position of the Negro, an increasingly large part of twenty-two million Negro Americans believes that Americans are "racists," insist on "keeping the Negro down," and will never allow equality, and that the only solution will be some form of separate political existence. One indicator as to how far we have moved is in the use of words. Consider, for example, "genocide." Last February, Stokely Carmichael spoke to a Negro audience in Oakland and felt he had to justify the use of "genocide" to describe the dangers facing Negroes:

> ... we are not talking about politics tonight, we're not talking about economics tonight, we're talking about the survival of a race of people. ... Many of us feel—many of our generation feel—*that they are getting ready to commit genocide* against us. Now many people say that's a horrible thing to say about anybody. But if it's a horrible thing to say, then we should do as Brother Malcolm said, we should examine history.

We have moved far in the course of a year. A leader of the SCLC says "genocide" is a danger. James Baldwin (in the June 2 Book Review section of the *New York Times*) asserts "white America appears to be seriously considering the possibilities of mass extermination." By now even moderate leaders use the term genocide, and feel they have to use it to appeal to young militants and to show they are not "Uncle Toms." By now, of course, white men who want to demonstrate their sympathy for Negroes will not demur from the use of the term; thus, Eliot Fremont-Smith, reviewing John Hersey's *The Algiers Motel Incident* in the *New York Times*, writes that the book, "shows America to be deeply—and unknowingly to most of its citizens—genocidal."

The public opinion polls report fantastically rapid changes of attitude among Negro Americans. A Louis Harris poll conducted *before* the Martin Luther King assassination reported on a measure of "alienation," and concluded that the numbers of Negroes "alienated" had risen from 34% in 1966 to 56% in 1968. The items measuring alienation included: *"Few people really understand how it is to live like I live"* (those agreeing rose from 32 to 66%); *"People running the country don't really care what happens to people like ourselves"* (those agreeing rose from 32 to 52%). The very same poll reports that 73% of the respondents agreed there has been "more racial progress" in recent years than there had been previously.

So the paradox exists in the very consciousness of Negro Americans. They agree there has been more progress, but also feel ignored, stepped upon, and remote from their society. (Whites do too, but in much lesser degree.) The changes in these general attitudes reported by the Harris poll are particularly striking because they are the sort of general question measuring malaise that one would not expect to vary much over time (*viz.*, "Are you happy?"); and yet they have changed rapidly. I speak of attitudes and the use of words. More striking are the realities of action—the riots since 1964, the general expectation of guerrilla warfare, the rise of the so-called Black Panthers in California and elsewhere and their amazing ability to seize the imagination of the Ghetto youth with a programme calling for armed resistance to the police, community control of the ghetto, freeing of black prisoners, and the ultimate hope for some type of national, separate, political existence for blacks.

THERE ARE three positions now current as to what to do about this strange impasse: social improvement and increasing extremism. One is that we must put down extremism, strengthen the police, create riot control forces. A second is that we must increase the rate of material advance more swiftly—eventually it must lead to a harmonious nation. A third is that social improvement is no longer the issue —separate political power and existence for Negro Americans is the only reality that will satisfy.

I think the majority of white Americans reject the first alternative as any full response to the crisis, though certainly most believe the maintenance of civil order must be part of any response.

The second position is the one for which the Kerner Commission has written a brief in its report, and most liberal Americans are likely to accept it. It is almost the only thesis one can put forward if one's conviction is that, on the whole, American society has been a success, that a major sign of its success is that it has incorporated and will continue to incorporate many diverse groups, and that it can handle the complex and frightening problems of an advanced technological society rather better than

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the varied assortment of Communist authoritarian states or vague utopias that is the rhetorical hope of the New Left. And yet the liberal position—and we can take the Kerner Commission report as expressing it best—has one basic difficulty.

It is that we have *already* carried out and are carrying out social programmes at an ever-increasing scale without, as we have seen, any movement towards the reward of "a united and peaceful nation." Take the figures of the Kerner Commission itself:

> Federal expenditures for manpower development and training have increased from less than $60 million in 1963 to $1·6 billion in 1968. The President has proposed a further increase, $2·1 billion in 1969... to provide work experience, training, and supportive services for 1·3 million men and women... [which happens to be more than twice the number of non-white unemployed].
>
> Federal expenditures for education, training and related services have increased from $4·7 billion in fiscal 1964 to $12·3 billion in fiscal 1969.
>
> Direct Federal expenditures for housing and community development have increased from $600 million in fiscal 1964 to nearly $3 billion in fiscal 1969.

There have been similarly heavy increases in health and welfare expenditures. All these figures are reported in order to criticise the build-up of expenditures as "not rapid enough" and to demand "far more money" in these and other areas. I am left with an uneasy feeling. If these rates of expansion reported by the Kerner Commission have taken place at the same time as the spread of urban riots and political extremism, is it not questionable whether further expansion will stem them? I am *for* the expansion of these programmes because they are the major means we have for achieving equality in occupations, education, housing, *etc.* But I do not think we can count on them to moderate attitudes—for political attitudes and development have a life of their own, and are not simple reflections of economic and social conditions.

THERE IS NO QUESTION in my mind that the demand for "Black Separatism" will not be easily moderated by new social programmes. Accordingly, we must face up to the demand for separatism in its own terms.

Here one must note that "separatism" seems to mean many different things. Some of them appear to me to be valuable and healthy, both for Negroes and for American society: the emphasis on positive identification with the group, "Black Power" in its sense of greater political impact and representation of Negroes; "Black Capitalism"; "Black history" and art. The chief difficulty presented by Black Separatism arises in the demands for territorial autonomy and "extra-territoriality." These have now been presented in many forms: a group of states to become a black nation; black enclaves in the cities, with certain rights and powers; special legal rights for blacks, as in the "Free Huey" demand and its argument that white judges and juries cannot try blacks (even though there are blacks among them). There is no question that American political leaders (and the great majority of the American people) will resist the demand for territorial autonomy and extra-territoriality. One war has been fought to preserve the Union, and the sense of what all Americans gain from a united nation, and what they might lose from a divided one, is strong enough to ensure that these demands will continue to be resisted. Nor is it clear that any substantial part of Negro Americans at present agrees with the Separatists. But their dynamism is frightening, and they are powerfully supported, in my view, not by the realities of the Negro condition and the hopes they offer of improving it, but by powerful ideologies. In particular, it is the new ideology that Negroes in America are "a Colonial People" and require freedom from colonial status.

IF THE DEMAND for territorial independence succeeds in capturing the minds of Negro Americans, it will be because blacks and whites have not truly understood the relationship between the varying groups that make up American society. Many, in both groups, see the society as far more monolithic and homogeneous than it has ever been. I am afraid that whites will be moved to fight to retain something that has never existed in this country, and the blacks will fight because they have not been convinced of the enormous scope for group diversity the society provides.

Almost every ethnic and racial group that has settled in this country has been "nationalistic" and "separatist," and the laws have permitted a level of separatism for many groups that has not yet been quite reached by American Negroes. Many groups have harboured and supported with money (and sometimes with

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armed volunteers) nationalist leaders interested in freeing or revolutionising their homelands, even when this was a matter of great embarrassment to the U.S.A. Most groups have maintained schools in their own tongue. Most groups have tried desperately to maintain the original home language, religion, and ethnic customs among their children in America. There has been one limit set on the free development of ethnic and racial groups in this country—territorial autonomy. But short of that, subtle and complex adjustments were made to accommodate a wide variety of differences.

The history of the gross prejudice and discrimination which almost all immigrant and racial groups have faced is well known; but we tend to be less aware of these "American adjustments" to accommodate a mixed population of different ethnic and racial groups. Thus, we have developed a pattern of political recognition, through the parties, in which groups of any substantial number get represented, through appointive and elective office. This system has worked well, without any laws requiring quotas, or specifications of "how much" and "what kind." There has been a pattern of economic integration in which groups have developed bases of economic independence. (Undoubtedly the general freedom this country has given to economic enterprises has aided this development.) Unfortunately, the ability to create such an independent economic base is now considerably limited by, among other things, the host of state and social licensing and regulatory requirements, trade union requirements, federal tax and accounting procedures, all of which today make it much harder for the less literate and sophisticated to become successful in business. We have allowed full freedom to religious organisation, and under the protection of religious organisation a wide range of cultural, social, political activities is carried on. We have given freedom to the creation of independent schools. All this has occurred even though a young patchwork nation has had the difficult task of fashioning a single national identity.

Compared with most countries that have tried to create themselves out of a mixed popution, there has been a certain genius in the American style of confronting this problem. The principle has been: no formal recognition of the ethnic and racial groups, but every informal recognition of their right and desire to self-development, assimilation or integration at their own chosen rate, to an independent economic base, independent social, religious, and political institutions, and political recognition as part of a united country. The principle has often been broken: laws have been erected against certain groups—most massively in the case of Negroes, but also in the case of American Indians and Orientals; and we have often restricted the free and spontaneous development of various groups through movements of "Americanisation" and forced patriotism. But the most massive and inhumane breaks in these principles have in the end been recognised as "un-American," and wrong: slavery for the Negroes; "separate but equal" facilities for Negroes; public discrimination against Negroes; separate schools for the Chinese; land laws restricting the right of purchase by Japanese; the forced relocation of the Japanese and their loss of property; the immigration laws establishing quotas for peoples and races; attempts of states to ban private schooling. All these have in the end been overcome by courts and legislatures, and the basic principle—no public recognition of race or ethnicity; every private consideration of its reality and meaningfulness—has, in the end, prevailed.

UNDOUBTEDLY, to argue that the Negroes, who stand at the very heart of American civilisation as a cruelly harmed people, can be (and, indeed, have been in large measure) incorporated into this pattern, will appear to many an act of Pollyanna-ish refusal to face up to evil in American society. Professor Robert Blauner (of the University of California at Berkeley) has argued forcefully that there are certain "colonised" peoples in the United States who do not fit the ethnic pattern I have described; and these are the Negroes, the American Indians, and the Mexican Americans. According to this thesis, the ethnic pattern that permitted a self-regulated rate of integration into American life prevailed only for the European immigrant groups; and to a much more modest degree, it prevails for the Chinese and Japanese. But there was a different pattern for those peoples who were conquered or brought here as slaves. They have been "colonised," made inferior to the "settlers" in every part of life (political, economic, social, cultural), deprived of their power and "manhood"; and for them only the colonial pattern of rebellion, resistance, and forceful overthrow of settler

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dominance is meaningful. Thus Frantz Fanon's passionate argument for the significance of violence against the settlers in recreating the colonised as a people (in his *Wretched of the Earth*) speaks to American Negroes as it speaks to the colonised everywhere.

If Professor Blauner is right, then all that remains for us "non-colonised," as settlers, is to figure out how, when the colonised are so scattered among the settlers, we may give them the independence that will make them whole—or, if we refuse, wait for them to take it, or destroy the Union in the effort.

BUT I THINK HE IS WRONG, and for one basic reason: whatever the relevance of the "colonisation hypothesis" to the past—when the Negroes lived as agricultural workers in the South, the Mexican Americans in villages in the Southwest, the American Indians on the reservation—it is scarcely relevant today when three-quarters of American Negroes have moved to cities to become not only workers and servants but skilled workers, foremen, civil servants, professionals, white-collar workers of all types; when (at a slower rate) the same thing is happening to Mexican Americans; and when even Indians can free themselves from any politically inferior status by giving up the reservation and moving to the city (as more and more are doing). These moves are voluntary—or if involuntary to some extent, no more so than the migration of many other groups escaping political persecution and economic misery. They lead to the creation of a voluntary community of self-help institutions. They lead to a largely self-regulated rate at which group cultural patterns are given up and new ones adopted. It is all quite comparable to what happened to the European immigrant groups. Statistics which show the wide range of outcomes that we find in all groups, whether European immigrant, racial immigrant, or the so-called "colonised," are strong evidence for the similarity.

Undoubtedly all these groups still face prejudice and discrimination; but this still does not make the "colonial" analogy fit. Prejudice and discrimination, it seems, are endemic wherever different groups socially interact. Are the Algerian workers of the slum settlements around Paris now "colonised"? Are the Spanish and Turkish immigrant workers of Europe "colonised"? Or are they not, rather, immigrant workers facing the prejudice and discrimination and inferior living conditions strangers so often do? Nor are prejudice and discrimination insuperable obstacles to economic advancement and political power. If we were to have to wait for "the end of prejudice and discrimination" before we could say the Negro was truly a part of American society, we would have to wait forever. The issue is: what is the *level* of prejudice and discrimination, how is it formulated in *harmful policies*, what *official assistance* does it get, and to what extent (on the other hand) *does the state act against its private manifestations*. If we apply these tests, I believe, we will find that the "colonial analogy" as applied to the American Negro is meaningless. For there has been a steady decline in all forms of expressed prejudice against Negroes, as indicated in public opinion polls and in everyday behaviour, and there has been stronger and stronger state action, outside the South (and even in some parts of the South) against manifestations of prejudice. Even the recent riots (as far as we can tell from the evidence) have led to no increase in prejudice or white antagonism.

The "colonial pattern" makes sense if one of two conditions prevails: there is a *legal* inferiority of the colonised, in which the settlers are given greater rights and prerogatives; or, even if there is a *formal* equality, in fact only tiny proportions of the colonised can reach high status in society. But this is not true of the Negro Americans, nor will it be true shortly of the Mexican Americans, and, if they so choose, of American Indians. The fact is that instead of keeping these groups out of privileged status most public policy and the programmes of most large private U.S. institutions is to bring them in larger and larger numbers into privileged status. What else is the meaning of the work of the Federal civil service in continually upgrading minority employees, of the colleges in recruiting them beyond the numbers that could normally qualify, of the various corporation programmes for training minority group executives and franchise holders? The scale of some of this is much too small; but the point is that its aim is to speed up a process of incorporating these groups into the mixed American society, rather than slowing it down.

THE ISSUE of whether Negro Americans are "colonised" or not is not to be settled by arguments between professors: it will be settled by Negro Americans themselves. If they view themselves as colonised, as suffering un-

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bearable repression, as prevented from leading that degree of national and separate existence that they wish within the present prevailing American pattern, then they will do everything to break that pattern; and it will be up to all Americans to decide whether the awful suffering of wars of national unity is to be preferred to the dangers of separatism. No one who has thought deeply about the American Civil War (or what is happening in Nigeria now) will be able to give a pat answer to this question.

The issue, I think, is not yet settled, despite the extravagance of Negro militant rhetoric. Three factors still argue against the victory of the "colonial analogy" among Negroes.

1. The substantial numbers of Negroes who *are* integrated into American society—the civil servants, the white-collar workers, the union members, the political party members, the elected and appointed officials. They are truly in a tragic situation, and no one can say whether they will choose to identify with those who insist on seeing them as "colonised," or whether they will argue for integration into American life, along the pattern that I have described.

2. The second is the possibility that moderate and available social change can still pacify the militants. While making large separatist demands, they would perhaps be satisfied with more jobs, better jobs, more Negro appointed and elected officials, better schools, better housing, a more integrated and respectful police force, and that degree of separate institutional identity and control which the American pattern can tolerate. Certainly we have done too little in all these areas; but we have done a good deal, and we must do more, hoping that in effect the separatists are not really as intransigent as they sound.

3. The enormous difficulty of any territorial solution to the demand for separatism, and the difficulty of devising any alternative.

BUT THERE ARE INDEED factors which argue for the success of the "colonial analogy" and the victory of separatism.

One is the enormous impact on Negro experience of past and present experience in the South, where Negroes were held captive and colonised indeed, and where there still remains the most unrelenting and sophisticated resistance to Negro equality in whole states and in large sections of the population. The colonial imagery of the South has been transported to East and West and to the great cities which are largely free of colonialism. There it struggles against the immigrant analogy—and, on the whole, it is losing. They shout, "We are still slaves" and "We want freedom" in the North, where the issue is neither slavery nor freedom.

The second is our failure to adopt rapidly enough new approaches to achieving effective equality for the Negro. While the immigrant analogy is still, to my mind, in large measure valid, it is not fully valid. Negro business must be created, subsidised, sustained, advised; job programmes must become better and more meaningful; the colleges must learn new techniques for incorporating large numbers of minority students, and the urban schools must undergo a transformation (though its nature is hard to define) in becoming effective with minority students. But all this is enormously demanding, so demanding indeed that we may not succeed. Mayor Lindsay, speaking to businessmen in New York—and he was perhaps the dominant liberal member of the Kerner Commission—has described what businessmen must do to make the hard-core unemployed effective:

> You've got to literally adopt this kind of employee, be responsible for his total condition 24 hours a day, seven days a week.... Adopt their families, a piece of the block where they live, a chunk of the city and its future. Know where they live, their economic condition, how their children are, whether there's a police problem, what the neighbourhood pressures are. If it's a woman, you have to know whether there's a male in the house and what her problems are....
>
> The businessman who does hire the hard-core unemployed is going to be confronted with absenteeism, poor working habits, deficiencies in reading and writing, negative attitudes....

If this is truly what businessmen and perhaps teachers must do effectively to employ or educate a substantial part of the minority population, we may simply not have the required degree of compassion, commitment, and capacity to succeed.

The third is the inability of both black and white to comprehend the character of the American pattern of group incorporation which has already had so many successes. On the white side, there is widespread fear of Negro separatism and Negro power, and it is a fear which, as I have suggested, fails to understand that every group has gone through (and some have retained) a substantial degre of separatism, and all have demanded (and many have obtained) political representation in appointive and elec-

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tive office, and control over pieces of the political action. As long as the nation does not succumb to a society of rigid compartments and fixed quotas and reserved seats, Americans can go some distance in meeting separatist demands. If suburban towns can have their own school systems and police forces, then, to my mind, there is no good reason why certain parts of the larger city should not have separate school systems and police forces. In any case, when the authority of teachers and the police have been destroyed—and they have been, in large measure, destroyed in the ghetto areas—there is no alternative to some pragmatic adjustment, to the creation of new social forms.

On the black side—and here blacks are joined of course by many whites, both liberal and progressive—there is an equal failure to comprehend the relationships of groups to the larger American society. There is a failure to understand that even while prejudice and discrimination exist, groups and individuals can achieve their ends and a satisfying and respected place in the American social structure. There is a failure to understand that groups vary in their cultural characteristics and in the area and character of their achievements, and that the owlish insistence on some total equality of representation is to deny the significance of special achievements and characteristics. There will come a time when the special gifts of Negro Americans may mean massive representation in politics, or in the arts, even if today it tends to mean over-representation only in such areas as professional sport. But the special character of American group life—its acceptance of individual merit and capacity and its calculated arrangements for group character and pride—should not be destroyed by a demand for fixed quotas and their incorporation into legal and semi-legal arrangements.

After all, I believe, there is a failure to understand, on the part of black militants and their too-complaisant white allies, that there *is* an American society with a tremendous power to incorporate and make part of itself new groups, to their advantage and not to the advantage of the larger society, and that this is not a *white* society. I find nothing so sad as hearing universities denounced as white racist enclaves, corporations denounced as white racist enterprises, the government denounced as a white racist establishment. A hundred years ago, it could have been easily said these were all "English institutions," and yet Germans and Irish became part of them. Fifty years ago it could have been said these were all "Christian institutions," and yet Jews became part of them. Today, it is contended that they are white institutions—and yet this too is not true. They will become and remain white institutions only if Negro Americans insist on some total separateness as a nation, only if they decide that the American pattern of group life cannot include them.

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William Sansom

Love at First Sight

RICHARD AND THE WOMAN who was to become Mona Lister fell in love at first sight. On a broad blue sea, on a southern ship, on holiday.

The usual shipboard romance, one might say? But it was not so simple as that. "Love at first sight" is in any case no unique phenomenon, it occurs much more often than we think. An intuitive quickening, a feeling less of first sight than of recognition, the instantaneous message from brain to heart and back again that the ultimate has been found at last, and deeply, tenderly, miraculously found at first sight. A *recognition*. As if it had all happened before.

Usually it has. It happens many times in the lives of most people, and is as many times later forgotten. Too often it becomes simple amity at second sight, when character fails to conform with appearance, when too many words have had their say. And then the divine rush of heart to head is never even remembered, it could not be thought to have existed.

What really catches at people's hearts is *enduring* love at first sight, another matter altogether. It is indeed unique because for once illusion truly adds up to the reality: but it can also be that a blindness created by such strong first forces stays chronic and fixed, a not necessarily unhappy conclusion.

Nature, to make sure of love, is prodigious and wasteful of it. One of its worst tricks is to attract the unattached by the very shine and brilliance of someone already in love: an intolerable waste of effort sobbed out in bars and lonely beds everywhere. Another deception, as science increasingly complicates man's environment, is the shuffling together of people out of context: people who meet in offices or on holidays, in the fancy dresses of work or play, who fall in love and marry and only much later wake up wondering whoever it was they met in the first place.

Richard and Mona Lister met out of context in a very different way, a way I like to think, or hope, was most unusual indeed. They often smiled about it later, it was so plainly a case of mistaken identity; smiled about it, and told people, like me—until the time was over for smiling.

TAKE A SEA CROSSING on a warm fine day, the blue water so milky smooth that currents can be seen like darker roads or rivers twisting far about on deep mysterious errands. The mainland has receded, islands play a game of hazy battleships on the horizon, and it is time for Mona, travelling alone, to take a stroll around the decks.

She is a woman whose delicate skin suffers from the sun and therefore, even in these days, carries a parasol. Dark hair, darker eyes, a mist of very faint freckles on the cheekbones to veil her glance with a mazy softness, a sort of shimmering. And there she goes, strolling past the lines of deck-chairs to where cabins and lounges begin, where the freeway narrows beneath a white-painted steel canopy supporting the deck above.

Mona strolled. Looked left at the sea across a trellis of mahogany and brass taffrail. No ships passing—only the diamond sheen of blue water blinding light upwards, and one

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lonely gull hanging out on the air. She looked down at the pale-scrubbed deck with its thin black stripes going on for ever. She looked right—and straight into a porthole, straight for the first time into Richard's eyes.

She stopped. That is, her body perhaps moved slowly on, but other matters stopped: time, her heart, and everything else, every thought like that gull seemed to hang on air, paused in one glassy balloon of a second.

His face was very close to the porthole, exactly circled by it, with little of the cabin showing behind; and there was no question but that his eyes were gazing intensely into hers and nowhere else. But intensely? They were the dreamiest, most faraway eyes she had seen. Visionary, rhapsodic, lost, eyes of the soul laid bare—who could say what they saw?

They might have been looking through her? So lost, so absolutely distant a look—sailors gaze thus away at the far horizon. And there was indeed a horizon somewhere behind her parasol.

But then his eyes seemed to clear, seemed to fix on her, and stayed searching for the long remainder of that surprised, devoted second; until, at last disconcerted—for their two faces were impertinently close—they turned modestly down, then aside, and a big red blush crept up over his cheeks.

She too turned away. She had been staring into a strange man's cabin, far more intrusive than simply into a strange man's eyes. But by then it had all happened—the sudden pounding of the heart, the swelling of the throat, the beautiful recognition. Love at first sight.

As she walked on, her only thoughts were: Will I meet him? Where could I meet him? Is he alone? And she entered into an immediate skein of calculation—one hour yet to the island port, one and a quarter with all the disembarking, and there is a B deck Bar, and two lounges, and an open observation deck behind, all to be kept an eye on.

Calculations, but innocent: the mechanics of simple necessity, in that long look between them it was understood that a real meeting must be expected. Yet a material means must be found—and she took the practical course of engineering its probability, she whose overriding reason for loving at first sight those other eyes was the opposite to her mood for action, was exactly their lack of practicality, their soulfulness, their dream. He was Mona's ideal image of a man. Even to the tender sensibility of the blush. A manly man but tender and sensitive, prototype of what she most wanted.

Richard, in fact, was precisely the opposite to this. He was predatory and materialistic, an engineer by profession, though of course like anyone else he had his softnesses, his romantic moments.

He afterwards said that she looked, in those first seconds, as pretty as a picture. And he meant precisely this. A romantic picture framed in the porthole, the pale-painted portrait of a yesterday's young woman slanting a parasol behind her dancing dark eyes.

Let us try to imagine it—the whole face opalescent in twice-reflected light, sun's light from the waves reflected upwards to make the moving pearly pallor of the deck's roof, then reflected down again, down in milky diffusion over the white of the girl's pastel skin, giving it the shadowed, live look of mother-of-pearl—the light in fact that, for one instance, Tissot so well painted under the striped canopies and among the frilled silks of his scrubbed and bustled yachts.

Behind her the sea, the white ship's framework. One pendant ear-ring, bright coral, a point of fleshy colour softening the lips in all that paleness of dress, cream parasol, milk-white skin. Dark hair a charcoal defiance of the pearly whites, the white blue beyond.

My, Richard thought when he saw this, what a picture, what a girl! And then as she paused, again: My! And then . . . my girl, *my* girl. For she too fitted his own particular dream: and moreover, he had recognised her recognition. It was done.

Then, as he came to his other senses and blushed, she blushed too, pink suffused ten-

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derly into the white picture, and she who had been moving all the time passed on.

Paused, and passed.

But he, trying also to pass, could pass no more.

WHAT RICHARD HAD been passing was water. No cabin where he stood, but the portside B deck Gentlemen's. He also stood in a little world of white, addressing bone-white china set in a white steel wall, white pipes and white cisterns all round. There, standing at holy attention, men could pass water and idly through the porthole watch the wider waters pass. And this was the sole reason for the far-off visionary look in the predatory Richard's eyes: such a look was never there except at these moments of private and inward thought. In fact, it is doubtful whether he was looking out through the porthole at all.

Micturition! There is something indeed sacred in this process. There is the stance itself. And the grave sobriety of a blank wall only a few inches from the eyes. Discipline and dedication. The quiet devotion of not improving the moment, but simply and humbly waiting until all is done. A time when the eyes dream inwards, and all is quiet with the soul.

Thus Richard stood as his love came into the picture. He stood at attention and non-attention at the same time, eyes away inwards with his private motion, one hand guarding an important attachment to the human heart.

Perfect, perfectly relaxed, as he afterwards smiled about it. Until, towards the end of those long seconds of love at first sight, he realised at last what he was doing, felt that even through the thick encaustic and steel he had been caught exposing himself, blushed and turned away.

Later, in B deck Bar, they met. All went well. Love flowered, and in this case, continued blind.

Mona even appreciated the fact that his noble poetic soul had its practical side: and Richard marvelled that his beautiful picture-girl of the modest whites had enough in her of "the eternal woman" to manoeuvre a meeting—she had shamelessly dropped cigarettes all over his knees.

They married.

Not until some two years later did she wake up to the fact that she had never again seen that longlost look in his eyes. Ironically, of course, it did come to his eyes again, but during the only private moments in all the intimacy of marriage, unseen and several times a day.

No, she put it down to the sea, shipboard, romance, holiday.

He was not the man she had thought him to be.

And their affair, begun on so calm a sea, in such propitious weather, was later lost, foundered on the everyday rocks.

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Melvin J. Lasky

The Prometheans

On the Imagery of Fire & Revolution

"We are not in a riot but in a revolution. All the established institutions must be destroyed...."
STUDENT LEADER, IN THE BERLIN DEMONSTRATIONS (*April 1968*).

"One thing we must, at the cost of our souls, stay away from—the bonfire. It is an obscenity...."
GÜNTER GRASS, IN FRANKFURT, TO YOUNG DEMONSTRATORS SETTING NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES ALIGHT (*September 1967*).

"Several thousand students armed with axe handles, wooden clubs and iron bars, stormed the Bourse gates chanting 'Temple d'Or, temple d'or!'... The Bourse was alight. It was a small fire at first which suddenly billowed and seemed to have caught hold. The reflection of the flames could be seen on the buildings opposite, and the rapidly diminishing group of young anarchists who had begun to run away from the entrance like small boys knowing they have done something naughty, danced only a few moments around what they hoped was to be the funeral pyre of capitalism."
NEWS REPORT, PARIS, *26 May 1968*.

"Réforme non, Révolution oui!"
CRY OF DANY (*Le Rouge*) COHN-BENDIT, AT THE SORBONNE DEMONSTRATIONS.

GIVEN the fiery and ferocious topicality of this point of departure, the place at which one must inevitably begin is in those pages of Turgenev's *Father and Sons* (1862) where the nihilism of "complete and unqualified destruction" is so classically presented.

Bazarov observes: "We act by virtue of what we recognise as beneficial. At the present time, negation is the most beneficial of all—and we deny—"

"Everything?"

"Everything!"

"What, not only art and poetry... but even ... horrible to say...."

"Everything," repeated Bazarov, with indescribable composure. Pavel Petrovitch stares at him; he had not expected this. Arkady fairly blushed with delight.

"Allow me, though," began Nikolai Petrovitch. "You deny everything; or, speaking more precisely, you destroy everything.... But one must construct too, you know." "That's not our business now.... The ground wants clearing first."

Pavel Petrovitch registers an objection: "the Russian people is not what you imagine it." Bazarov does not dispute that, is even ready to agree that he is right, but that "proves nothing." "How does it prove nothing?" mutters Pavel Petrovitch, astounded. "You must be going against the people then?" "And what if we are?" shouted Bazarov.

The argument goes on. Bazarov explains the source of his nihilism ("we saw that our leading men, so-called advanced people and reformers, are no good"), justifies confining himself to abuse, and then cuts things short. "I shall be quite ready to agree with you," he adds, getting

THIS *is the text of a paper which was recently given to the History of Ideas Seminar at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It will be published later this year in a Heidelberg* "Festschrift" *for the distinguished German scholar, Dr. Dolf Sternberger.*

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up, "when you bring forward a single institution in our present mode of life which does not call for complete and unqualified destruction." Pavel's cry—"I will bring forward millions of such institutions, millions!"—is to no avail. There was no point; it was, in those fateful Russian words, a difference of generations.

> "So that's what our young men of this generation are! They are like that—our successors!"
> "Of course, you can't understand me. We belong to two different generations.... Our turn has come. Our successors can say to us, 'You are not of our generation; swallow your pill....'"

I would not want to leave any narrow invidious national impression. It is not a peculiarly Russian pill; it was swallowed, earlier and later, by other generations in other lands. A leading member of the French revolutionary Assembly —M. Rabaut de St. Etienne, who was to be chosen President (and the election did not fail to horrify Burke)—was the Bazarov of his own day:

> All the established institutions of France only crown the misery of the people; to make the people happy it is necessary to renovate, to change the ideas, the laws, the morals... to change the men, the things, the words... to destroy everything, yes everything; for everything must be started anew.

Out of each conflict of generations, between fathers and sons, comes a Bazarov: a nihilist, an angry dreamer, a utopian destroyer. Indeed, the history of revolutionary enthusiasm appears almost as a series of variations on Michael Bakunin's maxim: "The passion for destruction is a creative passion...." But it is not without its interesting and subtle turns on the ideological cycle.

When Radischev looks out of his cab window at the state of 18th-century Russia, at the miseries of the exploited peasantry, he writes in his *Journey from St. Petersburg to Moscow* (promptly to be suppressed by Catherine, and its author exiled): "Oh, if the slaves raging in their despair would, with the iron that bars their freedom, crush our heads, the heads of the inhuman masters, and redden their fields with our blood!" In the next, more militant century, it was always *their* heads, *their* blood. Chateaubriand was witty but perhaps not serious enough when he remarked: "Contagion is a wonderful thing in France, and a man would cry 'Off with my head!' if he heard his neighbour cry the same."[1] The contagion afflicted enemies as well as neighbours and the cry always became, "Off with *his* head!" A Paris radical (Michel de Bourges) stood with Georges Sand beside the Seine, looking across the Tuileries, and told her that "in order that society should be renewed, the river must flow with blood and the palace must be reduced to ashes...."[2] There was an eternal fascination in the redness: in Blake's wondrous "red clouds," in the barbaric power of the "vital heat" (Michelet), in "the red fool-fury of the Seine" (Tennyson), in the rosy hope of an "affirming flame" (Auden). As Michelet explained himself, "Often in these days, the rise and progress of the people are compared to the invasion of the Barbarians. The expression pleases me; I accept it. *Barbarians!* Yes, that is to say, full of new, living, regenerating sap.... We other Barbarians have a natural advantage; if the upper classes have culture, we have much more vital heat (*nous avons bien plus de chaleur vitale*)."[3]

As for Blake, who was said to have paraded in London wearing the red cockade, his uncompleted poem on the French Revolution argued "Fear not dreams, fear not visions"—

> *For the Commons convene in the Hall of the Nation, like spirits of fire in the beautiful*
> *Porches of the Sun, to plant beauty in the desert craving abyss, they gleam*
> *On the anxious city....*

In the same spirit of these Jacobinical '90s, the 22-year-old Coleridge (exchanging letters with the youthful Robert Southey) went to the combustible essence of the principle of fire: within, that is, the metaphorical (and scientific) limits of the day. "Your undeviating Simplicity of Rectitude," Coleridge wrote, "has made you too rapid in decision—having never erred, you feel more *indignation* at Error, than *Pity* for it. There is Phlogiston in your heart...." Indeed there was, and the 21-year-old Southey refused to turn away from (at least not yet) phlogistic

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[1] *The Philosophy of Edmund Burke* (1960, ed. Bredvold-Ross), p. 161. Allen McConnell, *A Russian Philosophe: Alexander Radischev, 1749–1802* (1964). p. 60. *The Memoirs of Chateaubriand* (1965 ed.), p. 302.

[2] Douglas Johnson, *Guizot: Aspects of French History 1777–1874* (1963), p. 440.

[3] "In Memoriam" (cxxvii), *The Works of Alfred Lord Tennyson* (1926), p. 289. "September 1, 1939," in *The Collected Poetry of W. H. Auden* (1945), p. 59. Jules Michelet, *Le Peuple* (1841; 1956), p. xxxv.

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emotions and general inflammability. "God forbid! that the *Ebullience* of *Schematism* should be over. It is the Promethean Fire that animates my soul—and when *that* is gone, all *will be Darkness*...."[4] But there were already shadows across the beautiful Porches of the Sun.

The Fire of All Time

I WANT in another place to consider the problem of the wider anthropological context of this recurrent spectacle of fire: for whether we turn from the modern secular faith to ancient mythology or to primitive religions or to Christianity we are dramatically confronted by an ineluctable imaginative engagement with the forces of external nature and the elements of human biology. But, for the moment, let me offer only some glimpses of the larger metaphorical milieu.

1. The Flaming River to Paradise. In the collection of ancient Greek texts known as the Sibylline Oracles, which has preserved for us the visions of the early Judaeo-Christian apocalyptists, there is the graphic association of fire with both the end and the new beginning of terrestrial things.[5] The great wrath will cause the forces of evil

> *... to approach*
> *The pillar, where around a circle flows*
> *The river inexhaustible of fire.*
> *Then will the angels of the immortal God,*
> *Who ever liveth, direly punish them*
> *With flaming scourges and with fiery flames,*
> *Bound from above with ever-during bonds.*
> *Then in Gehenna, in the midnight gloom,*
> *Will they be to Tartarean monsters cast,*
> *Many and fierce, where darkness is supreme.*
> *But when all punishments have been entailed*
> *On all whose hearts were evil, then straightway*
> *From the great river will a fiery wheel*
> *Circle them round....*

Only a few lines later we are led to the prospect of the earthly paradise, for the just and the pious will be carried

> ... *thro' the flaming River, into a place of Light,* and into a Life without Cares, where the immortal Path of the great God is, and where three Fountains of Wine, Honey and Milk flow. And the Earth shall be equal to all, not divided by Walls or Partitions, but shall bear much Fruit spontaneously: All shall live in common, and their Wealth shall be undivided; neither Poor nor Rich shall be there, nor Tyrant, nor Servant, nor one greater or less than the other: No King nor Leader, all shall enjoy all Things in common; and none will say the Night is come, nor to Morrow or Yesterday is past; and no Care shall be for many Days: there shall be no Spring nor Summer, no Winter nor Autumn, nor Marriage, nor Death, nor buying or selling, nor setting and rising of the Sun, for there shall be a long Day.

2. Fiery Words. So also in the prophetic books of the Old Testament (and I cite only one of innumerable examples) where, as in *Jeremiah* (20:9, 5:14), the word remained in his heart "like a burning fire" and, moreover, "Because ye speak this word, behold, I will make my words in thy mouth fire, and this people wood, and it shall devour them...."

3. The Warrior's Fire. The Romans themselves had a conception of fury as a fire burning in the head or brain; and this (we are told), explains the strange passage in the *Aeneid* where Turnus, raging for battle, "is stirred by these furies and from all his face, as he burns, leap sparks, and from his fierce eyes darts fire...." Indeed, "the Chimaera on his head flames more fiercely in proportion to the fierceness of his warfare."[6]

4. The Ideology of Heat. What has been called "the ideology of 'inner heat'" appears to be central to many archaic tribal conceptions of magic, sorcery, and religious power. For the Indian Mohammedans a man in communication with God is "burning"; among the Hindus powerful divinities enjoy the possession of fire; Australian medicine men are held to be "fire-walkers." According to Eliade, at the centre of the ideology is the mastery of fire, its exaltation and its association with a celestial destiny.[7]

5. A Torch for a World Aflame. Nor are these aboriginal or exotic aberrations, for this relationship between fire, power, and prophecy obtains as well in other cultural traditions. In the 12th Canto of Dante's *Paradise* there is the tribute by St. Bonaventura, the Franciscan, to St. Dominic (just as in the previous Canto St. Thomas, the Dominican, had undertaken the encomium of St. Francis). As the last words

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[4] "The French Revolution" (1791), in Blake, *Complete Writings* (1966), p. 136. *Collected Letters of Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (ed. Griggs), Vol. I: 1785–1800 (1966), pp. 106, 164.

[5] *The Sibylline Oracles* (tr. Terry, 1890), p. 65; (tr. Sir John Floyer, 1713), pp. 30–1.

[6] R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought* (1951), p. 147.

[7] Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism* (tr. Trask, 1964), pp. 474–77.

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fall from *"la benedetta fiamma"* and the high great festival of song and flashing light ceases, a voice rises from "out of the heart of a new fire" to extol the saint, sweet and faithful, who was "kind to his friends and ruthless to his foes":[8]

E come fu creata, fu repleta
si la sua mente di viva virtute,
che, nella madre, lei fece profeta

A soul created so pre-eminent
In living might, that a prophetic power
From her womb's burden through his mother went.

Dante scholars have referred these lines to an explanatory passage about Dominic in the Roman *Brevariarium*: "His mother when pregnant dreamed that she had in her womb a dog-whelp [*Domini canes*, "the dogs of the Lord"], with a torch in his mouth, whereby to set the world aflame when he should come into the light." The text (under 4 August in "The Proper Office of the Saints") goes on: "... By this dream was figured that burning and shining light of holiness of life and power of doctrine, whereby he should enkindle godliness throughout whole nations. The end proved the truth of the image...."[9]

6. The Burning Enthusiast. In his epochal work on the *Eroici furori* (1585), Giordano Bruno carefully distinguishes the various stages which his new European hero has to endure as the fire of his spirit "warms, kindles, burns, blazes or inflames...." His enthusiasm becomes "absorbed in profound thought, stricken with urgent cares, kindled with fervent desires, excited by frequent crises." He cries, "I burn with fervid heat (*Infinito mi scaldo*)...." Bruno's heroic enthusiast "becomes agitated, and fluctuates amid the waves of hope, fear, doubt, ardour, conscience, remorse, determination, repentance, and other scourges which are the bellows, the coals, the hammer and the anvil...." Out of "a condition of infinite aspiration," he records the lines

If anguish infinite your fears should rouse
Make space, give way, oh peoples!
Beware of my fierce penetrating fire,
For if it should invade and touch you, ye
Would feel and know the fires of hell
To be like winter's cold.

Se d'infinite male
Avete orror, datemi piazza, o gente;
Guardatevi dal mio fuoco cuccente;
Che, se contagion di quel v'assale
Crederate che inverno
Sia ritrovarsi al fucco de l'inferno.[10]

7. Renovation through Conflagration. Seventeenth-century theologians constantly associated —and not without a sense of tumultuous political implication—the "renovation of the world" with the "world's conflagration." Trying to explain "how the Destruction of the World by Fire is to be understood" (and his friends later argued that the Puritan extremists had misunderstood him), Dr. Joseph Mede, who was John Milton's tutor, wrote: "... the *Beatum Millennium* is to begin in flaming fire ... whereof the World that now is shall be *refined*, and delivered from the bondage of corruption.... This conceit surely had its ground from that of Paul, 1 *Cor.* 3:13. *The day* (viz. of Judgment) *shall declare* (what is combustible in our works) *because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.*... Yet did they, at least some of them, expect *another fire* at the end of the thousand years for the destruction of Gog and Magog...."[11]

8. The Red Cloud. Nor were the non-theological eighteenth-century achievements of enlightened reason and rebellion ever very far from this ancient metaphorical centre. In his tribute (half-hearted though it was) to Rousseau as the true burning spirit of *la lumière* and *la révolution*, Proudhon wrote: "He put the flame to the power that during the preceding two centuries French men of letters had amassed. It is something to have kindled in the souls of men such conflagration. It is in this that the force and

[8] Dante, *Paradiso* (ed. Wicksteed, 1899), Canto XII, l.58–60, pp. 146–7. *Paradise* (tr. Sayers & Reynolds, 1962), pp. 158–63; *The Divine Comedy* (tr. Carlyle & Wicksteed; ed. Grandgent, 1932), pp. 476, 479.

[9] *The Roman Breviary* (tr. Bute, 1879), Vol. II, p. 1194. In his *Readings on the Paradiso of Dante* (1901), Vol. I, p. 404, W. W. Vernon remarks that the whelp was said to have been black and white, "hence the habit assumed by the order...." A. J. Butler, in his edition of the *Paradise* (1885), p. 157n., adds that "the play on *Dominicani, Domini canes*, will be familiar to all who have seen the fresco of Simon Memmi in Santa Maria Novella at Florence" (whereon the wolves, symbolising the heretics, are being mangled by black-and-white "dogs of the Lord").

[10] Bruno, *Opere italiane* (ed. Gentile, 1908), Vol. II, pp. 370–88, 466; *The Heroic Enthusiasts* (tr. Williams, 1887–9), Vol. I, pp. 142–54, Vol. II, p. 97.

[11] *The Works of Joseph Mede* (ed. Worthington, 1672), pp. 618–19.

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vitality of Rousseau consists. . . ."[12] As for the souls of the Americans, kindled in a not unrelated outburst of vital force, William Blake was entranced by the prospect that "Empire is no more, and now the Lion & Wolf shall cease" and by the sight of "Washington, Franklin, Paine. . . ."

> *Red rose the clouds from the Atlantic in vast wheels of blood,*
> *And in the red clouds rose a Wonder o'er the Atlantic sea,*
> *Intense! naked! a Human fire, fierce glowing, as the wedge of iron heated in the furnace. . . .*[13]

9. A Passion Kindled. Taking his cue from Jesus' own description of his mission (*Luke* 12:49, "I am come to send fire on the earth"), Kierkegaard argued that "Christianity was a fire kindled by Christ which should be kept burning . . . a setting of men on fire by kindling a passion . . . a setting on fire which was to bring conflict between father and son, daughter and mother . . . a setting on fire intended to tear 'kindred' apart in order to make single persons of them, which is God's will. . . . If you want to have Christianity bursting forth again, as a fire . . . then by this token the word is, 'Away, away with abstractions . . .' for every work of this kind is treachery to the fire. . . ."[14]

The Metaphorical Imperative

SO IT MAY NOT BE wholly surprising that throughout the entire modern complex of utopian and revolutionary incantations the controlling imagery of iron and fire and blood should persist. The politics of paradise are dominated by the metaphorical imperative. Every "living fruit of human progress," Bakunin declared, has been "watered with human blood." He spoke with enthusiasm of the "childish almost demoniac delight of the Russian people in fire"; he was thinking, of course, of the Moscow flames which singed Napoleon, and similar thoughts burned bitterly through Napoleon's mind. On a torn scrap of paper in his own hand (said to have been found after his death), Napoleon wrote: "A new Prometheus, I am nailed to a rock to be gnawed by a vulture. Yes, I have stolen the fire of Heaven and made a gift of it to France. The fire has returned to its source, and I am here! . . ." There had been a time, to be sure, when he was certain that the fire was a Bonapartist weapon. "A revolution can be neither made nor stopped . . . the revolutionary fire smoulders under the ashes, and sooner or later the conflagration flares up again with new vigour and devours all obstacles." It was Nature, or the very gods, that had turned the weapons the other way.

> There never was a vaster project conceived in the interests of civilisation with more generous intent or one that came closer to realisation. And here is the remarkable thing: the obstacles that made me fail did not come from men; they all came from the elements. In the south, the sea has been my undoing; in the north, the burning of Moscow and the cold of winter. Thus water, air, and fire, all of Nature, nothing but Nature—these have been the enemies of a universal regeneration which Nature herself demanded! The problems of Providence are insoluble.
>
> (*Conversation with Las Cases, 1816*)[15]

Bakunin, naïve and inexperienced in the ways of ideology and power, never lost his innocence, never learned that one could burn, and be burned. Herzen relates that Bakunin, on the way from Paris to Prague, met some German peasants shouting and demonstrating around a baron's castle. He alighted from his carriage, showed them what to do and, as he drove away, saw to his satisfaction that the whole castle was in flames. He was perfectly prepared to imagine "the whole of Europe, with St. Petersburg, Paris, and London, transformed into a vast rubbish heap. . . ." A contemporary novel attributes to Bakunin a characteristic definition of democracy: "Democracy is a temple of fire wherein the human race must be purged from the dross of slavery. . . ." In Trotsky's Marxist lexicography this was rather the definition of revolution itself, and in March 1905 he wrote in *Iskra* (whose sub-title on the mast-head commemorated the pledge of a Decembrist poet, "OUT OF THIS SPARK WILL COME A CONFLAGRATION"): "Peasants, let this fire burst all over Russia at one and the same time, and no force

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[12] P. J. Proudhon, *De la justice dans la révolution et dans l'église* (1870), Vol. IV, p. 169: *"Il mit de feu aux poudres que depuis deux siècles avaient amassées les lettrés français. C'est quelque chose d'avoir allumé dans les âmes un tel embrasement: en cela consiste la force et la virilité de Rousseau."*

[13] William Blake, "America" (1793), in *Complete Writings* (1966), p. 197. On the political imagery in this poem and in related pieces ("The French Revolution," 1791, and "Europe," 1794), see John Beer, *Blake's Humanism* (1968), esp. ch. 5, "The Genius of Revolution," pp. 95–138.

[14] Sóren Kierkegaard, *The Last Years: Journals 1853–1855* (ed. Smith, 1965), pp. 291–2, 294.

[15] *The Mind of Napoleon* (ed. Herold, 1955), pp. 64, 192–3, 281.

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will put it out. Such a nation-wide fire is called revolution."[16] Once, in warning Marx against the arbitrariness of revolutionary force, Proudhon confessed that he "would prefer to burn Property by a slow fire" rather than "make a St. Bartholomew's night. . . ."[17] It was a finicky distinction which had little to recommend it, as Alexander Blok pointed out with irony and contempt in his "Intelligentsia and Revolution"—"With voluptuous malice we stuck firewood, shavings, dry logs into a heap of timber damp from the snows and the rains; but when the sudden flame flares up to the sky (like a banner), we run around, crying: 'Oh, ah, we're on fire!'. . ." Blok's Scythians knew better, for they had not *"forgotten of a love/That burns like fire and like fire lays waste."*[18] "Let the fire," cried Wordsworth who had been disenchanted by revolution in France but reenthused by the rising in Spain, "let the fire break out afresh; let but the human creature be roused. . . ."[19] I have collected a hundred similar passages: from the 17th-century vision (in Winstanley's *The Fire in the Bush*) of the end of oppression with "the Spirit burning, not consuming, but purging Mankinde" to the 20th-century manifestos of Black Power revolutionaries. It was always (in the phrase popularised by a contemporary American Negro pamphlet) the fire next time.[20] It is the fire of all time, the great incendiary cliché, the paramount Promethean stereotype of man's political temperament.

All this was once referred to by Kant as "the terroristic manner of representing human history"—". . . now things cannot grow worse. Doomsday is at our door-step, and the pious enthusiast is already dreaming of the restoration of all things and a renovated world after the time that this one will have perished in flames."[21]

Saints, Martyrs, Rebels

NOTHING could be more superficial than the notion that all this has to do with some arsonist's simple pyromania (*Burn, Baby, Burn*). As I have already indicated, the incendiarism goes deeper. Both in legend and in philosophy the fateful association of fire with politics and power has ancient roots, as in the fragment of Heraclitus: "In its advance the Fire will seize, judge, and execute everything." One historian of ideas, confronting the question of what brought Heraclitus to the notion of universal change and why he chose fire as its symbol, suggests that it was "terrifying personal suffering brought about by revolutionary social and political upheaval."

> Heraclitus' philosophy of change arose out of personal experiences which were themselves terrifying: heir to the royal family of the priest-kings of Ephesus, he lived in a time of social revolution; there was an upsurge of new democratic forces and to these forces the Greek tribal aristocrats were beginning to yield. Heraclitus witnessed their yielding, and out of the suffering of this social experience was born the idea of the transitoriness of all things; everything is in continual motion and flux. . . . He saw in fire something we experience as a thing and which is yet a process having its own measure, its own law of motion. . . . Everything, therefore, could be seen as a transformation of fire.[22]

This follows Karl Popper's views, and earlier commentators had compared Heraclitus' discovery with that of "an earthquake in which everything seems to sway." "I do not doubt," Popper writes, "that this discovery was impressed upon Heraclitus by terrifying personal

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[16] Alexander Herzen, *My Past and Thoughts* (tr. Garnett, 1926), Vol. V, p. 134. E. H. Carr, *Bakunin*, pp. 187–8. Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed, Trotsky: 1879–1921* (1965), p. 123.

[17] Aaron Noland, "Proudhon and Rousseau," *Journal of the History of Ideas* (January–March 1967), pp. 33–54. George Woodcock, *Pierre-Joseph Proudhon* (1956), p. 93. Proudhon to Marx (17 May 1846), in *Les confessions d'un révolutionnaire* (ed. Riviére, 1929), pp. 435–6: *"je préfère donc faire brûler la Propriété à petit feu, plutôt que de lui donner une nouvelle force, en faisant une Saint-Barthélemy des propriétaires. . . ."*

[18] Alexander Blok, "The Intelligentsia and the Revolution" (1918), in *Russian Intellectual History, an Anthology* (ed. Raeff, 1966), p. 371. "The Scythians" (1918), in *A Treasury of Russian Verse* (ed. Yarmolinsky, 1949), p. 168.

[19] William Wordsworth, "Concerning the Convention of Cintra" (1809), in *Political Tracts of Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley* (ed. White, 1953), p. 165.

[20] *Works of Winstanley* (ed. Sabine), p. 451; James Baldwin, *The Fire Next Time* (1963).

[21] Immanuel Kant, *On History* (ed. Beck, 1963), pp. 139–40; *Werke* (ed. Weischedel, 1964), Vol. VI, p. 353: *"Von der terroristischen Vorstellungsart der Menschengeschichte . . . nun kann es nicht mehr ärger werden: der jüngste Tag ist vor der Tür, und der fromme Schwärmer träumt nun schon von der Wiederbringung aller Dinge, und einer erneuerten Welt, nachdem diese im Feuer untergegangen ist."*

[22] C. I. Smith, "Heraclitus and Fire," *Journal of the History of Ideas* (January–March 1966), pp. 125–127. Karl R. Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (4th ed., revised, 1962), Vol. I, pp. 11–17 and especially the notes, pp. 204–8.

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experiences suffered as a result of the social and political disturbances of his day . . . [a] reaction to the social revolution which he witnessed." Fire thus became the symbol of transmutation from one stage to another. There are even traditional reports of Heraclitus' belief in a *periodical conflagration*—just as revolutionaries came to believe in periodical rebellions in which the blood of martyrs watered the tree of liberty. The constant double image of revolution has been: blood and fire.

In one of his memorable bursts of ironical eloquence that turbulent German revolutionary, Ferdinand Lassalle, exclaimed: "What! Can anybody have struggled, like Faust, with firm and serious tenacity through the philosophy of the Greeks and the system of Roman law, through the various departments of historical science, as far as modern political economy and statistics, and can you seriously believe that the conclusion of this long course of development is to place the incendiary's torch in the hands of the proletariat?...." Of course it was seriously believable, for that Faustian struggle for the incendiary's torch was recognisably his own. The book which established Lassalle's reputation as a scholarly writer (in the years before he devoted himself to agitating for social democracy) was a long study of *The Philosophy of Heraclitus the Obscure* (published in 1858). It served for him as the discovery of "absolute motion," for Heraclitus "banished all peace and quietness from the world." He was strongly drawn to the philosophical hero of fire, motion, and struggle, and he registered with deep satisfaction that "Heraclitus was far removed from that apathy which inspired the ethical-political arguments of the Stoics with such profound monotony. His nature was one of storm (*Es war Sturm in dieser Natur!*)...." The turbulence was classical; and Lassalle, whose look was once described as "defiance incarnate," often pondered a favourite line from Virgil: *Flectere si nequeo superos, Acheronta movebo* (If I cannot bend the will of heaven, I will cause turmoil in hell). Something of this fiery nature was caught by George Meredith in his portrait of Alvan, the passionate lover of *The Tragic Comedians* (1880); but perhaps only Georg Brandes with his special antennae for the sights and sounds of the European personality in the nineteenth century could have sensed the true revolutionary vibrance:

> The old Greek thinker Heraclitus, whom Lassalle made the subject of long research, was in the habit of using various symbolical expressions to denote the primary force of existence—Fire, Stream, Justice, War, Invisible Harmony, Bow and Lyre; these expressions rise involuntarily in the mind if we seek some symbol to represent the dominant principle of Ferdinand Lassalle's life. Somewhere, in one of his letters, which is full of impatient outbursts against the tardiness with which events develop, Lassalle uses the phrase, "my ardent soul." Thousands use the expression as the mere figure of speech which it has become. Lassalle, perhaps, alone could use it without exaggeration, for his innermost being concealed some force akin to fire. His burning love for knowledge and science, his thirst for righteousness and truth, his enthusiasm, his unrestrained self-confidence, his deep self-conceit, his courage, his delight in power—these were characteristics which all found expression in the same fiery and devouring manner. He was a bearer of light and fire to the world; a bearer of light, bold and defiant as Lucifer himself; a torch-bearer who delighted to stand in the full glare of the torch with which he brought enlightenment—*grand oseur et grand poseur*....[23]

IF THE IDEA OF FIRE emerged in defiance and despair, the thing itself was born in mythological hope.[24] Prometheus is riveted to the rock because of his pity and fellow-feeling for mankind: without fire and the arts of civilisation the human race could never take on god-like powers. Worse than that, had not Zeus planned genocide?

> *As for long suffering men, he took no care at all;*
> *indeed his plan was to make the whole of their race*
> *extinct and then to form another race instead.*
> *Except for me no one opposed his purpose.*

Zeus was adamant, and an eagle feasted all day long on Prometheus' liver, gnawing it black; but Prometheus remained hopeful:

> *My lot*
> *Is to win freedom only after countless pains.*
> *... Zeus cannot fly from fate.*

All our themes are there in the spectacle of Prometheus, the opponent of genocide, the

[23] Ferdinand Lassalle, *Die Philosophie Herakleitos des Dunklen von Ephesos* (1858), in *Gesammelte Reden und Schriften* (ed. Eduard Bernstein, 1920), vol. VII, p. 114, vol. VIII, pp. 656–7. Georg Brandes, *Lassalle* (1877; tr. 1911), p. 7.

[24] Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* (tr. Rex Warner, 1947); H. B. Parkes, *Gods and Men* (1960), pp. 210–211; and, especially, Michael Grant, *Myths of the Greeks and Romans* (1964), pp. 178–89, and Karl Kerényi, *Prometheus* (1946).

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saviour of mankind, the lonely rebel, the uncompromising avenger—

But he will never win me over
with honeyed spell of soft, persuading words,
nor will I ever cower beneath his threats...
First he must free me from this savage prison
and pay for all my pain.

In the fragmentary *Prometheus Unbound* Heracles tries to save Prometheus when Zeus decides to "let moderation prevail," and the Prometheans have to take Hermes' criticism:

...your own want of good sense
has tangled you in the net of ruin, past
all hope of rescue.

Here, again, we have the ancient primordial association of fire with freedom, with kindly pity for oppressed man, with civilisation and its progress, and the dark shadow of a "net of ruin." Whatever may have happened in the lost plays, *Prometheus the Fire Bringer* and *Prometheus Unbound*, it is small wonder that the image of the Suffering Champion captured the imagination of Blake, Hölderlin, Goethe, Byron, Shelley, and indeed Rimbaud whose poet becomes "the thief of fire, charged with the government of humanity...." Campanella, languishing year after year in frightful Spanish dungeons and dreaming of the warmth and love of a Sun-State, cried that he was like Prometheus chained to the Caucasus (*ego tanquam Prometheus in Caucaso detineor*, 1 June 1607). Similarly, Marx avows "I shall never exchange my fetters for slavish servility." 'Tis better to be chained to the rock than bound to the service of Zeus."[25] For the young Marx, who began his philosophical career with a doctoral dissertation on aspects of ancient Greek thought, Prometheus was, as he confessed in his preface, "the grandest saint and martyr in the philosopher's almanac...." Both Marxist philosophy and revolutionary politics were to bear the traces of this Promethean point of departure. "Just as Prometheus, having stolen fire from heaven, begins to build houses and to establish himself on earth, so philosophy, having embraced the whole world, revolts against the world of phenomena (*wendet sich gegen die erscheinende Welt*)..." Or, in that memorable phrase of transcendental exultation:

Was innerliches Licht war, wird zur verzehrenden Flamme, die sich nach aussen wendet.

That which was an inner light becomes a consuming flame, turned outward.[26]

The Politics of Paradise

IT WAS SHELLEY who ended the sainthood and martyrdom of Prometheus by converting him into the triumphant hero of utopian revolution. He refused to be tempted by traditional practice and merely restore the lost dramas of Aeschylus. In his preface to *Prometheus Unbound* (1820) Shelley explains his aversion from "a catastrophe so feeble as that of reconciling the Champion with the Oppressor of mankind." No, Prometheus was to be a romantic protagonist of his own time: "the type of the highest perfection of moral and intellectual nature, impelled by the purest and the truest motives to the best and noblest ends."[27]

We will take our plan
From the new world of man,
And our work shall be called the Promethean.
(IV, 156–8)

As for his own personal plan, it was to make an alliance with "the great writers of our own age," those "companions and forerunners of some unimagined change in our social condition or the opinions which cement it." The time was now. "The cloud of mind is discharging its collected lightning...."

So does the drama begin with images of an overwhelming catastrophe.

Hark! the rushing snow!
The sun-awakened avalanche! whose mass,
Thrice sifted by the storm, had gathered there
Flake after flake, in heaven-defying minds
As thought by thought is piled, till some great truth
Is loosened, and the nations echo round,
Shaken to their roots, as do the mountains now.
(II, 36–42)

[25] Friedrich Meinecke, "Campanella," in *Die Idee der Staatsräson* (1924), p. 118; *Machiavellism* (tr. Scott, 1957), p. 94. Marx-Engels, *On Religion* (Moscow ed., 1957), p. 15.

[26] Karl Marx/Friedrich Engels, *Historisch-Kritische Gesamtausgabe* (ed. Rjazonov, 1927), Vol. I, 1, pp. 10, 64, 131. This edition reproduces as its frontispiece a contemporary "allegorical" print inspired by the prohibition of Marx's *Rheinische Zeitung* in 1843; for those interested in iconographical evidence, it is a sketch of *Der gefesselte Prometheus*: presumably the young Marx, chained to a printing press and attacked by a royal (Prussian) eagle.

[27] Shelley, *Prometheus Unbound*, in *Poetical Works* (ed. Hutchinson, 1967), p. 205.

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If heaven itself was being defied, Jupiter was under no illusions about the onset of immortal danger.

. . . alone
The soul of man, like unextinguished fire,
Yet burns towards heaven with fierce reproach,
and doubt,
And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,
Hurling up insurrection, which might make
Our antique empire insecure . . .
(III, i, 4–9)

This time there would be no pity, no release, no respite; the thunder and the fiery wheels were grinding the winds; there could be no refuge, no appeal. "Like a cloud," Jupiter groans, "mine enemy above darkens my fall with victory. . . ." And when the thunder "mingled with clear echoes," Prometheus as the captain of the victorious insurrection took the happy report from the "Spirit of the Hour" who had just returned from the terrestrial fronts:

. . . I floated to the earth:
It was, as it is still, the pain of bliss
To move, to breathe, to be; I wandering went
Among the haunts and dwellings of mankind,
And first was disappointed not to see
Such mighty change as I had felt within
Expressed in outward things; but soon I looked,
And behold, thrones were kingless, and men
walked
One with the other even as spirits do,
None fawned, none trampled; hate, disdain, or
fear,
Self-love, or self-contempt, on human brows
No more inscribed, as o'er the gate of hell,
"All hope abandon ye who enter here;"
None frowned, none trembled, none with eager
fear
Gazed on another's eye of cold command . . .
None wrought his lips in truth-entangling lines
Which smiled the lie his tongue disdained to
speak. . . .
(III, iv, 124–43)

Who could now doubt it? Earth had been made "like heaven." No revolution was ever so triumphant, no utopia so fulfilled.

The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself; just, gentle, wise. . . .
(193–7)

The lesson, in Shelley's final lines, was there for all the world's despairing rebels to read and, perhaps, to go and do likewise on behalf of "a new world that rights the disaster of this."

To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
To defy power, which seems omnipotent;
To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates
From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.
(IV, 570–9)

I should note that Shelley had warned that didactic poetry was an abhorrence to him and that "it is a mistake to suppose that I dedicate my poetical compositions solely to the direct enforcement of reform." No one would be reluctant to concede that there was here both the purity of poetry and the partisanship of politics (although, elsewhere, there were contradictions between the writer and the radical). In that same year of 1820, when he learned of the rising in Spain which forced the abolition of the Inquisition, he also composed his "Ode to Liberty" and with the same motive of apocalyptic trance. It opened with a line from Byron on the banner of freedom streaming "like a thunder-storm against the wind"; and among Shelley's so-called relics this cancelled passage was found:[28]

Within a cavern of man's trackless spirit
Is throned an Image, so intensely fair
That the adventurous thoughts that wander near
it
Worship, and as they kneel, tremble and wear
The splendour of its presence, and the light
Penetrates their dreamless frame
Till they become charged with the strength of
flame.

The Ultra-living Element

WHERE WE HAVE COME to is this: in the great blaze of revolutionary imagery, full of adventurous thoughts from heaven-defying minds, fire is the process of change and the pattern of hope and liberating struggle. It is the eternal human dream of light and power, as well as a recurring nightmare of death and destruction. As Gaston Bachelard has written, "fire suggests the desire to change, to speed up the passage of time, to bring all of life to its conclusion, to its hereafter. In these circumstances the reverie by the fireside becomes truly fascinating and dramatic; it magnifies human destiny; it links the small to the great, the

[28] *Shelley, Poems Published in 1820* (ed. Hughes, 1963), pp. 9, 146–56, 224.

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hearth to the volcano, the life of a log to the life of a world. The fascinated individual hears the call of the funeral pyre. For him destruction is more than a change, it is a renewal."

Fire, thus, emerges as one of the principles of universal explanation:

> If all that changes slowly may be explained by life, all that changes quickly is explained by fire. Fire is the ultra-living element. It is intimate and it is universal. It lives in our heart. It lives in the sky. It rises from the depths of the substance and offers itself with the warmth of love. Or it can go back down into the substance and hide there, latent and pent-up like hate and vengeance. Among all phenomena, it is really the only one to which there can be so definitely attributed the opposing values of good and evil. It shines in Paradise. It burns in Hell. It is gentleness and torture. It is cookery and it is apocalypse.... It is a tutelary and a terrible divinity, both good and bad. It can contradict itself....[29]

To move, in recent fire imagism, from Bachelard to Brown is to move from the poetry of the spark to the poeticality of the embers, almost as if to suggest the historic exhaustion of an immemorial metaphor. In Bachelard's *psychanalyse du feu* the imagery is still set meaningfully in a spirited version of a general historical psychology; in Norman O. Brown's neo-Nietzschean context a manner of contradictory epigrammatism reduces it grimly to the zero point of meaninglessness and incoherence. For Brown, who contends that metaphor is "the original mistake in every sentence,"—that "metaphor consists in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else" and that "metaphor is a mistake or impropriety; a *faux pas*, or slip of the tongue; a little madness; *petit mal*; a little seizure or inspiration..."—there can remain only this sententious last parody of Prometheanism:

> The real prayer is to see this world go up in flames.
>
> The true sacrifice is total, holocaust. *Consummatum est.* The one is united with the all, in a consuming fire....
>
> The final conflagration; or apocalypse. The unity of life and death as fire.... The fire next time. The revolution, or second coming.... A fiery consummation.... Learn to love the fire. The alchemical fire of transmutation: *Wolle die Wandlung. O sei für die Flamme begeistert.* To be content in the purgatorial fire.... The apocalyptic fire... this world always was and is and shall be ever-living fire....
>
> The resolution of the antinomy between liberation and repression: fire.... To be aflame at every point. To be alive is to be burning.
>
> Fire is freedom. Spontaneous combustion. Spontaneity is ardour.... Love is violence.... Birth is bursting, the shell burst.... Peace lies in finding the true war. The reconciliation of opposites, the making of friendship, takes place on the battlefield.
>
> Find the true fire.... Fight fire with fire.... Save us from the literal fire.... The final judgment, the everlasting bonfire, is here now. Truth is error burned up.
>
> Freedom is fire, overcoming this world by reducing it to a fluctuating chaos, as in schizophrenia; the chaos which is the eternal ground of creation.... Thank God the world cannot be made safe, for democracy or anything else.[30]

Apocalyptic has been reduced to a *pointe*; and Prometheus has become a platitude. Old troupers are trotted out on to the stage, forced to taking their vaudeville turns in an antiquated repertory of noise and gesture.

TWO FINAL REFERENCES, for I cannot of course make any systematic attempt here to look into the direct relevance of the vast anthropological and psycho-analytical literature, from Frazer and Freud onwards, to this theme. Sir James Frazer's classic study, *The Golden Bough*, is naturally enough rich in suggestiveness: fire as a charm to rekindle the sun, the Sacred Fires, the Fire Festivals of Europe, fire as a protection against witchcraft, fire and the burning of human effigies, etc. As in the metaphor of flaming revolution which comes both to destroy and to renew, there is a striking dualism exemplified in Frazer's summary of the two theories for the explanation of the Fire Festivals.

> On the one hand it has been held [the solar theory] that they are sun-charms or magical ceremonies intended, on the principle of imitative magic, to ensure a needful supply of sunshine for men, animals and plants by kindling fires which mimic on earth the great source of light and heat in the sky....
>
> On the other hand it has been maintained [the purificatory theory] that the ceremonial fires have no necessary reference to the sun but are simply purificatory in intention, being designed to burn up and destroy all harmful influences, whether these are conceived in a personal form as witches, demons, and monsters, or in an impersonal form as a sort of pervading taint or corruption of the air....
>
> On the one view, the fire, like sunshine in our latitude, is a genial creative power which fosters

[29] Gaston Bachelard, *La Psychanalyse du Feu* (1938), pp. 19–20, 35; *The Psychoanalysis of Fire* (tr. Ross, 1964), pp. 7, 16.

[30] Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body* (1968), pp. 177–83, 248.

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> the growth of plants and the development of all that makes for health and happiness; on the other view, the fire is a fierce destructive power which blasts and consumes all the noxious elements, whether spiritual or material, that menace the life of men, of animals, and of plants. According to the one theory the fire is a stimulant, according to the other it is a disinfectant; on the one view its virtue is positive, on the other it is negative.

The two explanations, Frazer suggests, "are perhaps not wholly irreconcilable."[31] Indeed, sun-like fires, like tidal waters, are the essential sources of earthly purification: what won't wash clean will be burned. The hygiene may be humdrum but in its ultimate form it is the flood and the conflagration, those great and inescapable metaphors of that cosmic revolution which will turn the earth—after the deluge, or out of the ashes—to new life.

Freud too—and he was not uninfluenced by his reading in 1911 of Frazer's *Golden Bough*[32]—speculated on the role of fire in human history. His paper on "The Acquisition of Power over Fire" (1932) considers both Prometheus and the Phoenix in the context of a psycho-analytic interpretation of fire myths.[33] Freud's point of departure was his own footnote in his *Civilization and Its Discontents* in which he wrote:

> Psycho-analytic material, as yet incomplete and not capable of unequivocal interpretation, nevertheless admits of a surmise—which sounds fantastic enough—about the origin of this human feat [the acquisition of power over fire]. It is as if primitive man had had the impulse, when he came in contact with fire, to gratify an infinite pleasure in respect of it and put it out with a stream of urine. The legends that we possess leave no doubt that flames shooting upwards like tongues were originally felt to have a phallic sense. Putting out fire by urinating—which is also introduced in the later fables of Gulliver in Lilliput and Rabelais' Gargantua—therefore represented a sexual act with a man, an enjoyment of masculine potency in homosexual rivalry. Whoever was the first to deny himself this pleasure and spare the fire was able to take it with him and break it in his own service. By curbing the fire of his own sexual passion he was able to tame fire as a force of nature. This great cultural victory was thus a reward for refraining from gratification of an instinct. Further, it is as if man had placed woman by the hearth as the guardian of the fire he had taken captive, because her anatomy makes it impossible for her to yield to such a temptation. It is remarkable how regularly analytic findings testify to the close connection between the ideas of ambition, fire and urethral erotism.[34]

If there is a possible meeting-point between Frazer and Freud it could, I imagine, be located on the island, east of New Guinea, where a Melanesian myth recorded by an anthropologist ascribes the origin of fire to "the vagina of an old woman." Mircea Eliade adds the comment that this "seems to indicate that the feminine magic is earlier than the masculine sorcery. . . ."[35] If true, this would only add to the recent consternation in Freudian circles over the whole reversal (based mostly on current endocrinological research) of the Adam-and-Eve relationship.[36] Has the whole history of civilisation and culture been a conspiratorial male exploitation of basic femininity? One can almost hear the crack of the thunder and the lightning. The spectacle of Eve resuming her original priority over Adam could be the most revolutionary restoration of all time.

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[31] J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough* (1940), p. 642.
[32] Ernest Jones, *Freud*, Vol. III (1957), p. 350.
[33] Freud, *Collected Papers*, Vol. V (1950), pp. 288–9.
[34] Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (ed. Jones, tr. Riviere, 1930), pp. 50–1n.
[35] R. F. Fortune, *Sorcerers of Dobu* (1932), pp. 296–7; Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism* (1964), p. 363n.
[36] See the breath-taking paper by Dr. Mary Jane Sherfey, "The Evolution and Nature of Female Sexuality in Relation to Psychoanalytic Theory," in *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association* (January 1966), pp. 28–128.

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ART

Death of the Nude

By Edward Lucie-Smith

IN HIS CLASSIC BOOK, *The Nude*, Sir Kenneth Clark devotes a good deal of space to the various representations of Vitruvian Man. He reminds his readers that Vitruvius thought that "man's body is a model of proportion because with arms or legs extended it fits into those 'perfect' geometrical forms, the square and the circle." Sir Kenneth says:

> It is impossible to exaggerate what this simple-looking proposition meant to the men of the Renaissance. To them it was far more than a convenient rule: it was the foundation of a whole philosophy. Taken together with the musical scale of Pythagoras, it seemed to offer exactly that link between sensation and order, between an organic and a geometric basis of beauty which was (and perhaps remains) the philosopher's stone of aesthetics.

One might perhaps add to this the fact that the concept of Vitruvian man probably retained its hold for so long because it was not only convenient and philosophically neat, but peculiarly seductive. We may analyse the visual arts with the mind, but we perceive what we analyse with the eyes of the body. From this, it is but a short step towards supposing that the body itself is one of the real measures of art. But, this proposition granted, we must also grant that we have suddenly arrived at a point where the old standards no longer apply, and where "the nude" in Sir Kenneth Clark's sense, is as dead as that much less beautiful creature, the dodo. The more one studies the question, the more one becomes aware that the twentieth century has seen not one revolution in the visual arts, but two, and that the second of these is intimately bound up with a revolt against Vitruvian Man, and all he stands or stood for.

In the art of such men as Michelangelo, Titian, Annibale Carracci, Rubens, Ingres, and (even) Courbet, the naked human body serves a very particular function. It is both the focus and the measure of our sensations as we look at the works of art in which it appears. Even when the bodies are clothed, we remain keenly aware of the influence which a study of the nude has had over the artist who painted or modelled them. And this happens whether the bodies are represented "as large as life," or smaller or larger than life. It is our identification with the figures as they are represented which, very often, enables us to accept the scale of a particular work of art—to find grandeur, for example, in some of the smallest of Rodin's sketches. Alice, it will be remembered, swallowed the contents of a bottle labelled "*Drink Me*," and then grew smaller or larger more or less at will.

To this extent, the cult of the nude in Western art suggests, as I've already hinted, that our canons of appreciation, at least for the past five hundred years, have been largely "sympathetic": by which I mean that they have been a matter of the spectator's willingness to project himself into the representation; or, rather, to divide himself into two parts, one of which experiences whatever sensation is offered, while the other ruminates and judges. In this sense, Bernard Berenson's emphasis on "tactile values" is correct, at least for the pictures to which he applied it. This emphasis on "sympathy" may also serve to explain some of the worst excesses of the Victorians: the curious way, for instance, in which Ruskin's art criticism seems to swing quite unconsciously between the aesthetic and the literary, and his apparent inability to distinguish, even in his own mind, between one sort of sympathy and another. A notorious case of such a misjudgment is to be found in Ruskin's description of Landseer's "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner": "the clever painting of the wood of the coffin and the folds of the blanket are language—language in the highest degree."

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WHEN THE CRISIS in art finally arrived, it was even more painful and prolonged than the one which had produced the Renaissance. We can judge of the painfulness simply by looking at Picasso's "Demoiselles d'Avignon." The distortions which Picasso uses have a negative function as well as a positive one. They tell us what Picasso is against; the view of art that he condemns. Their violence is the measure of his protest. But he is still content to use a representation of the human body as a vehicle for this protest. In our minds, we compare the representation he puts before us with the representations in the classic canon, and it is the gulf between them which makes us aware of what is happening. But it's not going too far to say that Picasso's "Demoiselles" would be pointless unless we knew something about what had preceded it.

However, just as the nude is not the only thing in the established tradition of painting, so Picasso's distortions of the human body are not the only products of that phase of creativity which we now sometimes describe as "classic modern." In that phase, the uncompromising geometric abstraction of Mondrian might be thought of as marking a complete rejection of the ideals of the Renaissance. Yet the more we study his work, the more we become aware of the fact that this is not the case, and that Mondrian's system of proportions is really no different from that which was employed by Piero della Francesca. We instinctively measure his paintings, quite physically, against ourselves. In fact, we react to them in much the same way as we respond to the severe landscapes of Poussin. Poussin, it is true, peoples these landscapes sparsely with figures, but it is the system of proportions within the whole canvas that we respond to, and not merely the proportions of the actors.

THE MODERNIST REVOLT did not stop short with Picasso or with Mondrian. Eventually it imposed a strain upon the old concept of Vitruvian Man which this was unable to withstand. Perhaps the first really damaging assault made upon it was that of the surrealists. Dali's paintings of the 1930s do not strike me as great works of art, but I believe that they have more historical significance than is generally allowed to them. The viscous distortions which Dali imposes on the human figures in his work; the way in which, for example in "The Ghost of Jan Vermeer of Delft which can also be used as a Table," he draws the flesh out as if it were so much well-masticated bubble-gum, and then arranges this limp substance in forms to suit himself—these are a more radical assault on our faculty for empathy than the distortions in Picasso's "Demoiselles." As I've said, Picasso's picture still acknowledges tradition, because it condescends to argue with it. It is more doubtful if Dali proceeds thus. True, he uses a glittering illusionist technique. But the aim of the illusion is to disorient us, to coax us away from the old, solidly familiar world, and to release us into that of dream or nightmare. One of the experiences that can come to us in dreams is the feeling that our bodies are distorted, that they have somehow become alien and monstrous instruments, adapted to an unfamiliar environment. It is to this sensation that Dali refers.

Surrealism, driven into exile in the United States by World War II, proceeded to give birth to Abstract Expressionism, a way of painting which takes André Breton's doctrines about automatism much further than the original surrealists ever did. Breton gave the following recipe for producing a text, in the *Surrealist Manifesto* of 1924:

> Have someone bring you writing materials after getting settled in a place as favourable as possible to your mind's concentration on itself. Put yourself in the most passive, or receptive, state you can. Forget about genius, your talents, and those of everyone else. Tell yourself that literature is the saddest path that leads to everything. Write quickly, without a preconceived subject, fast enough to remember and not to be tempted to read over what you have written.

Pollock translated this into the method of working which he described as follows:

> My painting does not come from the easel. I hardly ever stretch my canvas before painting. I prefer to tack the unstretched canvas on the hard wall or the floor. I need the resistance of a hard surface. On the floor I feel more at ease. I feel nearer, more part of the painting, since this way I can walk around it, work from the four sides and literally be *in* the painting.... When I am *in* the painting I'm not aware of what I'm doing. It is only after a sort of "get acquainted" period that I see what I have been about. I have no fears about making changes, destroying the images, *etc.*, because the painting has a life of its own. I try to let it come through. It is only when I lose contact with the painting that the result is a mess. Otherwise there is pure harmony, an easy give and take, and the painting comes out well.

When we read this description, we immediately become aware that Vitruvian Man is indeed fighting for his existence. But there are still one or two things which link Pollock's art to the old canon. For instance, his motions of pouring, trickling, and smearing were necessarily governed by the motions of which the

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human body is capable. Indeed, this was to a large extent the point of the process which he describes: the physicality of the process produced, to Pollock's way of thinking, a "truth" which couldn't be got at by any other method. But it was still a truth about humanity.

THE GIGANTISM OF Abstract Expressionism, and the extremely free techniques which the artists employed, do, nevertheless, mark an important stage in the movement away from what art had always been thought to be. The next stage was exemplified by the veils of colour which Morris Louis produced by tilting the canvas, and allowing the pigment to flow freely over its surface, and to soak into it, because this surface was left unsized. Louis thus made the process of painting yet more automatic, and far less deliberately physical. But what he does is still recognisably a continuation of Abstract Expressionism. There was also a reaction against it. The artists concerned with this, the paladins of Pop, took a course which apparently led back towards figuration, and therefore back to the old criteria of judgment. When Pop Art first appeared, many critics hailed it, not by that name, but as the "New Figuration."

It's true that there were caught up in the Pop Art movement, and especially on the British side of it, a certain number of painters who can fairly be described as figurative, and who would be content with no other label. Peter Blake is one of them. But they were not central. While Pop Art is full of images, these images have not, as a rule, been observed at first hand. The Pop artist chooses, he accepts, he even modifies, but he does not actually initiate the transference of the image from one sphere of being to another: from that of "life" to that of "art," if this crudity is permissible. Images only begin to interest him when they are already processed; for example, when the camera, or the commercial draughtsman, have already intervened. What seems figurative therefore tends to have its real basis in abstraction, and the real roots of Pop are to be found in experiments with collage. Here the fact that some elements in the collage are representational very often tends to lie away from the centre of what is being done.

COLLAGE, which destroys scale, is a technique which is essentially hostile to the Vitruvian idea. Discrepancies of scale are, of course, something which the Mannerists experimented with in the sixteenth century. A notable example is Pontormo's "Joseph in Egypt," in the National Gallery, London. But, as we can see from this picture, Mannerist violations of proportion are always closely calculated in relation to what true proportion might be thought to be: that is, the composition is articulated to show us the alternative which the artist has refused. We find no such calculation in Pop. If we try to use ourselves—the body and our own instinctive knowledge of the body—as the measure of a characteristic painting by Rosenquist, for example, we find ourselves disoriented —vertiginous with a vertigo that Mondrian would never induce. Andy Warhol, with his repeated photographic images—the same car-crash, the same race-riot, over and over again in irrelevant shades of pistachio green or shocking pink, makes a still more deliberate assault on our powers of empathy. With each repetition the image is progressively drained of meaning, and our power to empathise with other images in other circumstances is diminished. This, in a sense, is the point of Warhol's activity as an artist.

Yet such a rejection of a well-established process—the very foundation of Western art for several hundreds of years—does not take place merely because one man wills it to happen. Warhol has caught on to something, but he is not the sole and conscious architect of the change, any more than it can be attributed to Salvador Dali or to Pollock. We see the inevitability of a particular shift in direction by looking at the activity, not of those artists who seem to go along with it easily, but of those who seem to resist and protest.

IN THIS CONTEXT, it is interesting to examine the work of two painters: William Coldstream and Larry Rivers. Coldstream's cold, dry, rather stiff nudes, arrived at by an obsessional process of measuring, seem opposite in mood to the *dégagé* work of Rivers. Yet a shrewd piece of hanging in the Gulbenkian Exhibition held at the Tate in 1964 went far towards proving that Coldstream and Rivers have a lot in common. The paint texture of their respective contributions, which hung side by side, was very different, but the underlying pictorial architecture was not. Rivers' *The Family* and Coldstream's *Two Nudes* showed the degree to which the architecture of the human body now tested the artist when he tried to realise it. The forms of the nudes in these two pictures just barely held together; one imagined that they would collapse into a heap of spare parts at any moment. These two artists mark, in fact, a further stage in a process which we already see at work in the painting of Cézanne, who made such enormously heavy weather of what had come with ease to Annibale Carracci. I cite Carracci not only as the type of the academic artist, but also as a painter whose preoccupation

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with volume—the three-dimensional quality of objects—brings him close to Cézanne.

Another instructive comparison is that to be made between Larry Rivers and Géricault. Rivers is a painter who seems to have much knowledge of, and feeling for, the French nineteenth century. The lyrical brushwork which he uses derives from Manet, just as Manet seems to have derived it from a study of Velasquez and Goya. And one of the most obvious sources of Rivers' early nudes, notably the nude portrait of the late Frank O'Hara, is the academies of Géricault. Géricault had what Delacroix once described as a *côté Bandinelli*, and his nudes are much in the High Renaissance tradition. Even when using a model who stands in much the same pose as one of Géricault's Rivers cannot manage the logic of this, and it is curious to see how his version gangles by comparison. The reluctant life-studies made by contemporary art students gangle, of course, still more.

ONE CAN, I THINK, venture to interpret the development of art since Cézanne as part of a continuing crisis of perception which has also left its traces elsewhere. This crisis seems directly attributable to the enormous expansion of technological and scientific knowledge, which has now made it impossible for any single individual to have a complete perception of the world, or even to believe that he has one. The nude occupied the predominant position it did in Western art for one very good reason: the world the artists knew was man-sized and man-centred. We cannot say this of the world we know now. Just as the Renaissance pre-occupation with the human body was part of a swing away from the transcendentalism of the Middle Ages, so our own artists' rejection of the nude is an accurate reflection of the intellectual climate.

Where art itself is concerned, Cézanne has a key position—Roger Fry already saw this clearly, and critics have gone on stressing the fact ever since. If one wants to characterise Cézanne's activity, one must, I believe, focus on his habit of making difficulties over what the conventional artists of his day still considered to be easy. In Cézanne's mature paintings, one sees two apparently contradictory endeavours. He tries to bring home to us the reality of what he (and we) are looking at more fully than it has ever been brought home before, and he tries to preserve a pictorial unity which joins together every square inch of flat surface on which he is painting. The picture, too, must be respected as an object. These two intentions collide; they exert enormous pressure upon one another. The distortions that result show us how agonising the conflict is. We see from these works that even in Cézanne's day the simplest realities had begun to be questioned, and that it would not be long before the human body must cease to be the universal measure.

More recent developments in art should serve to convince us that some kind of measure is necessary. Modern civilisation has been subject to a barrage of criticism which has grown louder as technology has developed. The question of scale has entered into a good many of these criticisms. There is the persistent feeling, for example, that many modern buildings are over-vast. They slip from our comprehension as objects, just as knowledge slips away. The Renaissance sometimes built on a vast scale, just as it painted on a vast scale. But the proportions of its more massive architectural achievements—St. Peter's, or the Palazzo Farnese—are still multiplications of the human proportion. We do not get this feeling from the new Pan-American building which straddles Park Avenue in New York. But the Pan-American building has, if rather lumpishly, come to terms with the new architectural facts of life. The early skyscraper-builders tended to belie their own technological control by adding a nervous top-dressing of "style": hence those French chateaux raised into the heavens, upon an immense podium of stories which the eye was invited to ignore by the fancifications at the top of the building.

IN THESE EARLY SKYSCRAPERS, and in a good many later buildings too, modern technology and modern economics have imposed their own rules upon the builders—rules which conflict uncomfortably with the architectural tradition as inherited from the Renaissance. Hence that feeling of disorientation, of "scalelessness" if I may call it so, which we feel when looking at their façades or when exploring their interior spaces. The perfect elegance of Mies van der Rohe's Seagram Building in New York is to some extent belied by the odd shapes and sizes of some of the spaces one encounters immediately upon entering it.

PAINTERS and sculptors, not being subject to the utilitarian demands which architecture makes upon its practitioners (buildings must shelter men), have been more at liberty to try and find a way out of the difficulty. To some extent, there has been an attempt to try and replace the sense of the human scale—which the Renaissance certainly understood to imply finite boundaries—with a feeling for organic rhythm. Pollock created his large,

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late canvases with a sense of endless rhythm in mind, and achieved thereby a kind of pictorial organisation which reminds me of the great seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Japanese masters of screen painting, Sotatsu and Korin, who worked on a comparable scale. The comparison is a significant one for this reason: the Far Eastern tradition of art has never centred its attention upon the human body, just as Far Eastern philosophy and religion have never accepted man himself as the centre of the universe. Instead, Far Eastern artists found in the panoramic landscape what Westerners looked for in the nude. It must be remarked that their tradition broke down even sooner than ours.

However, there is one aspect of Pollock's work which still binds him to the Western past. For him, in his late work, the canvas still seems to have applied space in the sense of "depth," as well as in the sense of "breadth" or "height." The space is very shallow, but we are aware that behind the calligraphic marks, the drippings and the smearings, there is something, some distance for the eye to penetrate. With Pollock's successors in America, we no longer get this feeling. Frank Stella, a leading member of the school of "Post-painterly Abstraction," has been at pains to point out in various interviews that the object-quality of the canvas is precisely what he seeks to preserve and to emphasise and strengthen—I mean the sense of its integrity *as an object*, without mysteries held in reserve. The picture does not invite us to step inside, as Renaissance pictures do; it does not accept our own scale, as Mondrian's work does. Instead, it sets up its own system of proportions which challenges our sense of what we are, and of how we exist.

It is easier to grasp this point if one looks not at the paintings, but at the sculptures which are now being produced on both sides of the Atlantic—it is, in any case, significant that so much creative effort should now be going into sculpture. Much has been made of the fact that modern sculptures—the works of Anthony Caro and Philip King among them—should suddenly have descended from their pedestals, and should now stand there in our art-galleries on the same footing as the spectator himself. These are "other existences" to which we are forced to adjust ourselves. More, they deliberately flout the human proportion, on the grounds that, if this is adhered to, the process of adjustment will be thwarted. In English art, one can see a clear sequence of development towards this position. It can be traced from the work of Henry Moore, through that of Caro, and thence to that of sculptors such as Annesley, Bolus, or Tucker. The traditional sense of proportions still informs most of Moore's work. His characteristic reclining figures do more than merely allude to the classical canon. If one looks at them long enough, they suddenly begin to seem very close to the work of a neo-classical artist such as Thorwaldsen. The weaker of Caro's big pieces are like Moore himself in disguise. As one traces the rhythms of the girders, one realises that the rhythms and proportions of the body are still being echoed. Caro succeeds most clearly when he most deliberately breaks away from Vitruvian atavisms.

The newest generation of sculptors show small trace of these atavisms. Their weaknesses can be attributed to quite other causes. At their worst, the sculptures they make have an unformulated, unconvincing look, as if the artist had had nothing to struggle against, or for—as if, indeed, any combination of the same shapes would be as good as the one arrived at. Bad art is now not art which is badly done (that implies that there is a better way of doing it) but simply art which is *uncreated*.

Contemporary art is not a struggle to embody experience, nor a revolt against an established method of embodiment, but a return to square one—a questioning of the very nature of experience, and perhaps of the idea that there is such a thing as "experience." How are we to bring a world without order, and without any obvious means of imposing an order, into meaningful relationship with ourselves? It will be recalled that the study of the nude brought with it not only a means of taking the measure of the world, but a means of taking the measure of works of art. Hence the way in which, in academic criticism, one writer can build upon another. The death of the nude has brought with it, among other things, the present huge confusion in our sense of values, and in our judgments of art.

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ARCHITECTURE

Stones of Empire

By James Morris

I must be gone to the crowd untold
Of men by the cause which they served unknown,
Who moulder in myriad graves of old;
Never a story and never a stone
Tells of the martyrs who die like me,
Just for the pride of the old countree.

ALFRED LYALL

IT WAS by their buildings that earlier Empires were most arrestingly remembered. Storks upon a Roman viaduct, proud towers in an Andean plaza, the squat menace of the Pyramids, seen small but alarming from the Mokattam hills—any of these could instantly suggest to an unlettered visitor the age and power of a lost dominion. The British in their imperial heyday had evolved no style so absolute as the Roman or the Egyptian, if only because they were members of a wider civilisation, sharing a culture with the rest of the Western world.[1] Buildings would not be their chief memorials: but across the Empire, nevertheless, they had left architectural imprints that were recognisably their own, to remind posterity with a gable or a clock-tower that the Raj had passed that way.

In their earlier years of Empire they had scattered through their possessions buildings in the Queen Anne and Georgian styles, reflecting the ordered security of society at home, and now commonly called Colonial. Much of the best was in the lost colonies of the United States, where the Americans had given the style subtleties of their own, and in the old parts of the Empire there were many good examples too, stabled and impeccable in Nova Scotia, or wilted by heat and humidity in the estates and merchant settlements of the tropics. They gave a sense of continuity to the British presence, linking the plantations of the old Empire with the Chartered Companies and railway workshops of the new: but far truer to the spirit of the imperial climax, and much more widely admired by the British, was the heterogeneous collection of idioms loosely called the High Victorian. The characteristic form of the imperial prime was romantically picturesque, loosely derived from Gothic or Byzantine models, and ornamented all over with eclectic variety. It was not how one imagines an imperial style. It was not exactly imperious. But in the elaboration of its hybrid forms, the towering exuberance of its fancy, its readiness to accept a touch of the exotic here and there, its colossal scale and its frequent impression of enthusiasm wildly out of hand—in all these things the style truly reflected this high noon of imperialism. In Canada the British adopted mansard roofs and château turrets, in India they built railway sheds of Saracenic motif, and in British Columbia, looking westward across the Pacific, they built a Parliament with pagodas.

But beneath all these alien veneers the authentic British showed, in the red brick and the mullion windows, the wrought iron and the commemorative medallions, or just in a true-blue inscription, recording the cost of it all, commemorating an occasion, or honouring, like the text on the Simla telegraph office, prefectorial values:

MOLEM AEDIFICII MULTI CONSTRUXERUNT:—
RATIONEM EXEGIT I. BEGG[2]

SUPREME in every imperial city stood the house of God, on a hill if there was one about, and generally Gothic. Sometimes it was a princely pile. On a hundred improbable sites, encouched in buffalo grass or dripped about by frangipani, there stood a genuine Anglican cathedral, with a Bishop's Palace somewhere near and a flutter of surplices in the Sunday trade winds. Even more than the mansions of

[1] Though Sir Osbert Sitwell once suggested that a British Empire style might "lie dormant" in the Brighton Pavilion.

[2] Many men erected the stonework of this building: I. Begg directed the work.

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colonial governors, these stately buildings expressed a sort of hook-nosed and scholarly assurance, and gave the traveller from England an uncanny sense of *déjà vu*. There was one very like Hereford in the Punjabi town of Ambala, on the road from Delhi to Kalka.[3] There was one rather like Lincoln down the road from the Renaissance-style Post Office, the Classical Town Hall, the Byzantine market and the Tudor Government House in Sydney. The Cathedral at Calcutta used to look like Salisbury, until the 1897 earthquake knocked its spire off.[4] The cathedral at St. John's, Newfoundland, started by George Gilbert Scott in 1844, was burnt out in a fire in 1892, and now stood portentously, a vast humped shell, high above the clapboard streets of the port.[5] The cathedral at Lahore was by Scott, too, and was all layered in the brown dust of the Punjab, with a baked brown close, a few brown stringy trees, and a catechism echoing across the Mall from the brown cathedral school across the way. The cathedral at Fredericton, New Brunswick, was modelled originally on the parish church at Snettisham in Norfolk, and completed according to the advice of the Ecclesiological Society of Cambridge. The cathedral at St. Helena was described by one Governor of the island, R. A. Sterndale, as being "utterly devoid of architectural beauty outside or in."

If there was not a cathedral, there was certainly a parish church. There it stood in splendid incongruity on heathen strand or far-flung waterfront, and not only Anglicans were moved to find it there, for like those Mounties at the head of the White Pass, it spoke of order and authority, meals at the proper time, clean sheets and punctual trains. Any of a thousand would serve us for examples, but let us choose the church of St. John which stood in a fine wide churchyard above the waterfront at Hong Kong. St. John's was in the very best part of town. Government House was its neighbour one way, Flagstaff House the other, and within convenient walking distance were the barracks, the parade ground, the cricket ground and the public gardens. Behind rose the steep streets of the Peak, the most fashionable residential area. In front was the waterfront, looking across the marvellous harbour to Kowloon. Easily, benignly, the tower of St. John's presided over those varied scenes. The waterfront buildings in those days were vaguely Italianate in style, of a kind common to all European settlements in China, and the quaysides themselves were picturesquely Chinese, all coolie hats and sampans. The slab of the Peak behind was tawny and brown, except where the taipans had planted their lush gardens, and the general colour of the scene was a bleached grey, as though all the paints had slightly faded. The stance of St. John's, however, was unaffected by it all. It stood there precisely as it might have stood in Cheltenham or Tunbridge Wells, assimilated into the scene by sheer force of character. Like the minaret of a mosque, it represented more (or less) than a faith: it was the emblem of a society, expressing temporal as well as spiritual values, and clearly built upon the assumption that if God was a church-goer at all, he was obviously C. of E.

Next to the home of God, the home of the Empire-builder. The domestic architecture of the Victorian Empire was everything that it was at home in England, with tropical overtones. There was no class or style of contemporary British housing that you could not find, lifted bodily, somewhere in the overseas possessions. Even the mean terrace houses of industrial England were reproduced in the cities of Australia, where a British proletariat existed to occupy them; the Australians also favoured a peculiarly froward kind of bungalow, with grey-washed walls and lead-coloured iron roofs, which they disguised with an acacia or a couple of Norfolk pines to look like a week-end cottage. The English suburban villa was broadcast throughout the Indian hills, and the first thing any conventional colonial magnate did, when he had made his pile in Parramatta or Kimberley, was to build himself a really lurid Gothic mansion, just as urned, terraced and carriage-swept as any his contemporaries were erecting in the environs of Manchester. Even the odd folly appeared in the Empire, honouring the traditions of English eccentricity: the Astana, the palace of the White Rajahs of Sarawak, had a Gothic tower and high-pitched roofs of wooden shingles, and was supported on white-washed brick arcades.

Often these replicas of home were absurdly ill-suited to their setting—if not in looks, at least in comfort. Even in England those florid piles were scarcely functional, and when one added to their original disadvantages all the hazards of tropical life, from termites beneath the hall floor to troops of servants' babies in the stableyard, they must sometimes have made the *memsahib*'s heart sink. But there were exceptions, even in the heyday of High Victorian. The English settlers in South Africa were building some very agreeable homesteads, trim with trees and fences like Kentucky stud-farms, and

[3] It was bombed by aircraft during the fighting between India and Pakistan in 1965.

[4] When they rebuilt it, without its spire, it looked like Canterbury.

[5] It is rebuilt now, but still unfinished.

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far more comfortable than the shambled farms of their neighbours the Boers. The tea-planters' houses of Ceylon, with their immensely tall narrow corridors and their outdoor kitchens, were often surrounded by admirable lawns of coarse mountain grass, upon which the planters' ladies enviably sat, buzzed about by harmless insects and salaamed by passing serfs.

The archetypal Anglo-Indian bungalow was an uninspired compromise. In the beginning it was simply a box, for living in, with a veranda all around it to keep it cool. When British families began to go to India a second storey was placed upon the box, and on top of it again a sleeping platform was often built, with a ladder to reach it from the roof on the very hottest nights of hot weather. Cool creepers were encouraged to grow over and around the veranda, and sometimes it was covered with an aromatic screen, moistened with running water by coolies outside, and smelling sweetly fresh and herbal. Behind was the compound, in which the servant community lived, and all around was sprinkled garden, acting as insulation against the hot dust of street or desert. Upon this basic form every sort of change was rung, and in its grander versions the bungalow had anything up to twenty rooms—a dining-room and a drawing-room downstairs, bedrooms and a family sitting-room above.

SUCH A HOUSE stood for imperial sense. For imperial sensibility we will pay brief calls upon two very different possessions. At Zomba, in Nyasaland, the British Consul accredited to "the Kings and Chiefs of Central Africa" had built a Residency that was a model of its kind, beautifully set upon the slopes of a forested mountain (the home of Rider Haggard's "People of the Mist") and surrounded by delicious half-wild gardens. It had conical towers at each end, to fortify it against savages, and verandas upstairs and down, and was proudly claimed to be the finest building in East Africa north of the Zambesi: with its steep roof and big low rooms, the mountains behind and the wide lush valley in front, it looked genuinely indigenous to Africa, a sensitive synthesis of sun and shade, ruling and ruled.

The houses on the Savannah at Port of Spain, capital of Trinidad, offered sensibility of a more distracted kind. There architectural clairvoyants could peer behind the composure of Victorianism into its wild reality. The Savannah was a wide green park, perhaps a mile across, preserved more or less in its natural state. There was a bandstand and the usual race-course, and on the grass groups of Negro and Indian boys, scattered across the green, played interminable games of cricket, occasionally bursting into impromptu carnival. Trees ran down to the edge of the grass, and the whole was encircled by an electric tramline. Around this wide expanse a staggering gallimaufry of mansions surveyed the scene. Some were domed, some were stained-glassed, some had turrets, some had gables. There was half-timbering, and pictorial tiling, fenestration ranging from the medieval to the Georgian, spikes and pagodas, weathercocks everywhere, casement windows as of faery lore, bobbles and battlements, mullions and ornamental ironworks, silhouettes of Rhenish castle or Loire château—all in esplanade on the edge of the Savannah, in mad embodiment of the imperial variety.[6]

PUBLIC BUILDINGS of the most august elaboration honoured the Queen, the Arts and Sciences or the principle of imperial Government. Town Halls were scarcely less imposing than Parliament buildings, and clock towers were ubiquitous—the one in the middle of Colombo had a lighthouse on top, and the one at Aden was much the most prominent structure in the colony, standing high on a bare hill overlooking Steamer Point. Many of these enormous buildings were designed by soldiers, others by celebrated English architects of the day, but so vastly overwhelming was the spirit they represented that it was very difficult to tell the Captain of Engineers from the new Palladio.

It was the spirit of Art for Empire's sake. We read that when a wealthy south Indian philanthropist decided to found a boarding-school in Madras "his attention was directed not only towards improving the results at the University Examinations but also the construction of an artistic pile of buildings with a tower in the middle." The tower-in-the-middle impulse informs many of the great buildings of the Pax Britannica. Their purpose does not seem to matter, and is seldom clear. They may be railway stations, libraries, ladies' colleges, covered markets. All are heavily clothed in symbolic ornament, and come to blur indistinguishably in the mind, a general mass of pomp strewn across the world in the Queen's name.

Probably the most daunting group of official buildings in the Empire was in Bombay. It stood like a massive palisade in parallel with the sea, separated from the beaches only by an expanse of brownish turf, a railway line, and a

[6] The Port of Spain houses are still in their full glory, with more cricketers than ever shouting "*Owzat?*" or "Very pretty, sir," in the best imperial fashion on the Savannah. The Zomba house is now a hostel for Government employees, and its grounds form a public garden.

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riding-track called Rotten Row. Here in three great blocks the Establishment of the Bombay Presidency was concentrated, celestially removed from the chaos which, out of sight beyond Esplanade Road and the Victoria Terminus, ran indescribably away to the north. Side by side stood the Secretariat, the University, the Library, the Clock Tower, the Law Courts, the Public Works Department, the Post Office and the Telegraph Office—a group of public buildings worthy of a great capital, and unmatched for scale in any English city outside London. It was a heady parade. Some was Venetian Gothic, some French Decorated, some Early English, and the Post Office, so the guidebook says, was simply "medieval (architect, Trubshawe)." Enormous palm-mat awnings shaded the windows, and high on their vast balconies dignitaries of the Raj could sometimes be seen strolling in white suits, discussing sewage costs with underlings or interviewing contractors. Nothing could be more unbendingly official than these buildings. They looked as though never, in all their years of dignity, did a lady drop a scented handkerchief upon their stairs, or a small boy prop his hoop against the porter's lodge. The Secretariat alone, designed by Captain H. St. Clair Wilkins, Royal Engineers, had taken seven years to build, and a notice inside recorded with approval that whereas the estimated cost was Rs 1,280,731, the actual cost was only Rs 1,260,844.[7]

In Simla, steel-bolted offices below the Mall; in Wellington, New Zealand, the largest wooden buildings in the world, designed not to hurt if an earthquake demolished them, and containing all the Ministerial offices and all the Archives of State; in Bulawayo, Rhodesia, a white-walled and thatched-roof Government House built on the site of Lobengula's kraal; and in Ottawa a Parliament building which illustrated, better than any other, the romance of the imperial ideal at its best, the dream of cloud-capped towers and halls of brotherly debate which shimmered in many an Empire-builder's mind. The Parliament of the Canadian Confederacy was seen from the start as an epitome. Canada was the idealist's end of Empire—a people united in reconciliation, a colony emancipated, a wilderness civilised, the principles of parliamentary democracy transferred in triumphant vindication from an ancient capital to a new.

When they built their parliament the Canadians were consciously building a symbol, and they chose a properly sacramental site. The west bank of the river at Ottawa is flat, and runs away sullenly ino the wilderness and the frozen north. The east bank is high and wooded, rising in grand bluffs above the water, and offering wide desolate prospects in every direction. Up there, in a site unmistakably of the New World, the English architects Thomas Fuller and Frederick Stent erected the most sumptuously imperial of buildings. It was best seen from Major's Hill, a little way downstream, for there its symbolisms showed clearest. To the left were the stepped locks of the Rideau Canal, descending steeply to the river in a virtuoso demonstration of man's mastery over nature. To the right the river ran away infinitely cold and uninviting, sometimes clogged with huge rafts, and chuffed over by steamboats. High in the middle, lapped by respectful trees and statuary, the turrets, towers and variegated roofs of Parliament rose in mysterious supremacy—a tall clock-tower their apex, outlier wings with mansard roofs and gabled windows, the library of Parliament buttressed and octagonal like an English chapter-house—with roofs of green and purple, and stonework splashed everywhere with reds, yellows and whites. Proud Canadians took their sons up Major's Hill, to point out the lessons of this majestic spectacle: and watercolourists threw an extra glow around it all, as they might embellish an allegory.

ONE DAY in 1836 Colonel William Light, Surveyor-General of South Australia, stood on a bluff above Holdfast Bay and chose the site of Adelaide. He was the bastard son of a Royal Navy captain and a Malay half-caste woman, and had gone to Australia at the invitation of Gibbon Wakefield, who had high-flown plans for one of his colonies there. Light's job was to survey the country and apportion land to settlers, and almost the first thing he did was to pick a spot for the capital. The city was started absolutely from scratch, on military principles, in a place deliberately and scientifically selected out of the endless bush. First Colonel Light decreed a circular road, surrounding the entire site. He lined it all around with parkland, as an insulation against the bush, and in its centre he deposited a double city: to the north a residential area, around Wellington Square, to the south a business area, around Victoria Square. Between the two lay another park, with the Torrens River running through it, containing Government House, cricket grounds, a parade ground and an artificial lake. Adelaide was an elegant little city from the start, and although in the course of time Light's plan was partly overlaid by haphazard development, still

[7] The buildings remain, daunting as ever, but land reclamation has removed them some distance from the sea, and tempered their majestic effect.

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it remained a standing reproach to the cheek-by-jowl disoriented cities of the Mother Country.[8]

It was a paradox of Empire that the British, the most pragmatic of peoples, should have best expressed themselves architecturally in planned townscapes—in groups rather than individual buildings, skylines rather than façades. This was partly because sites were generally virgin, and partly because soldiers so often laid out settlements, and partly because in their overseas possessions the British allowed themselves to be more formal and methodical than they often were at home. There were no sentimental yearnings for the crooked way, the rolling way. Right angles were *de rigueur* in the imperial towns, streets were often numerically named: many cities, like Adelaide, were built to a grid. Streets were often immensely wide, to allow ox-trains to turn in them, and the setting of spire against dome, tree against clock tower, was often arranged with methodical finesse. Foreigners were frequently struck by what seemed to them an uncharacteristic logic of design. Von Hübner, surveying the straight broad streets of Australia, concluded that the young Englishmen of the colonies "lean to the American." Certainly the cities which the British had summoned into existence across the world were notable for a spaciousness, an airiness, that suggested boundless promise—as though the colonial planners foresaw from the very start their couple of shacks and a lean-to shop transformed into a metropolis.

MELBOURNE, FOR EXAMPLE, had been founded only sixty years before, when a Mr. John Batman signed a land agreement with the aboriginal chiefs of the area—the three brothers Jagajaga, together with Cooloolock, Bungarie, Yanyan, Moowhip and Mommarmalar. No Colonel Light stepped in, to enlighten its origins with green belts and zoning, but it had already become a city of consequence, gilded with the profits of sheep-range and gold-rush. It was built to a grid, regardless of the shape of the ground. Each main street was flanked by a lesser access road, so that Lonsdale Street had its Little Lonsdale Street in parallel, Bourke Street its Little Bourke Street, Flinders Street its Flinders Lane. The business houses had their front doors on a big street, their back doors on a small, and suavely among them proceeded the supreme Australian thoroughfare, Collins Street, already claiming itself to be the finest street in the southern hemisphere. (To every other Melbourne street, Miss Clara Aspinall had written in the 1850s, "there is an American, go-ahead spirit, very objectionable to the well-regulated minds of our sex.") There were no squares or crescents. The centre of the city was rigidly geometrical, partly because it made land sales easier, and it was in the suburbs that the individualism of Australia found expression. These were very British. Carlton was frankly modelled on Bloomsbury, and when they established their first seaside suburb the Australians naturally called it Brighton. Street after street the villas extended, each in its garden, across the Yarra River and down to the sea; rich and showy houses, often delightfully touched up with decorative cast-iron, with ballrooms and nurseries, fern houses and coach houses, stucco decorations everywhere and stained glass on the landing. From these elegant and commodious retreats, as the panegyrists used to say, furnished in the costliest taste of four-poster and mahogany, such magnates as had escaped the bank crash of 1893 drove into town along broad tree-shaded boulevards, out of *rus* into *urbs*, to their flamboyant offices on Chancery Place, to lamb chops at the Melbourne Club, or simply to perform the social ritual known as "doing the Block"—strolling up and down the north side of Collins Street, fetching up at last at Gunsler's Vienna Café, where *everybody* went.

English visitors might scoff at such a city ("isn't it a little far from Town?"), and Melbourne citizens of cosmopolitan pretensions habitually disparaged it, too. But these great cities of the white colonies—Melbourne, Sydney, Toronto, Durban—were already much finer places than the industrial cities of the English provinces. They were handsome towns: not subtly handsome, but boldly so. In the detail they often slavishly copied English patterns, but on the whole they had a freshness all their own, as though their builders had torn Birmingham or Manchester breezily apart, and begun all over again.

Give me old Melbourne and give me my girl,
And I will be simply all right,
Does anyone know of a better old place,
Than Bourke Street on Saturday night?

THE BRITISH, who generally neglected their waterfronts at home, or blocked them all off with high-walled docks, used them rather better abroad. They created no Golden Horns, it is true, and wasted a few such marvellous sites as Wellington or Vancouver, but one did

[8] Poor Light, though he is now gratefully remembered in Australia, came to a sad end. He resigned his job after a series of differences with his superiors, and died in 1839, aged 54, penniless and tubercular, in a cottage of mud and reed near his city site, nursed by his English mistress Maria.

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not easily forget the harbour-front at Hong Kong, the formal splendour of Empress Place in Singapore, or St. John's in Newfoundland, with its tumble of wooden houses secreted behind the Narrows. Sometimes the imperialists even set out to give gaiety to their waterfronts. Almost the first thing they created at Aden was a forlorn and blistered Esplanade, facing Front Bay. Sydney Harbour was flanked with little villas, perched Riviera-like high and low along its banks, and the seafront at Durban, where the Zulu rickshaw boys waited outside the hotels with bells on their ankles and feathers in their rickshaw wheels, was already one of the brightest of Victorian water-places. As for the Esplanade at Colombo in Ceylon, that isle of imperial delights, it was almost Breton in its seaside elegance, and only seemed to be awaiting Proust's young ladies to flounce along the boardwalk with their bikes and parasols. At one end stood the swanky Galle Face hotel, with its gay sunblinds and majestic hall porters; at the other the British Army barracks were built in sunny enfilade, like expensive hotels themselves; facing the sea was the oval-shaped Colombo Club, white, shuttered, and Members Only. Between them all stretched a huge seaside lawn, beautifully maintained by the Municipality, with white rails like a race-course all around it, and Dufy ships sailing brightly by beyond the seawall.

And at Madras, beyond the Coromandel surf, the British erected the best of all their city skylines, a romantic extravaganza comparable to that Whitehall view from the little bridge in St. James's Park. In London the oriental elaboration seemed gloriously alien: in Madras, the oldest British city of the Raj, exotic flourishes seemed only proper. The skyline was like a cross between the Kremlin, a story-book Damascus and St. Pancras railway station. Its buildings were, in fact, quite widely separated, and various in their styles, and seen close to resolved themselves into huge warrens of courthouses and Government offices, all arched and vaulted, with sunshine and rain pouring alternately down open staircases, and immense piles of documents glimpsed beneath portraits of old Governors and judges through barred unglazed windows. When seen from a distance, though, through the haze of the Carnatic noonday as your ship approached the anchorage, something ethereal happened to those structures: their walls were lost in the bustle of the city, and only their bulbous roofs and towers seemed to float above Madras, insubstantial against the blur, portly for Victoria and domed for the East.

"The Maharajah gave the order and Yakub Sahib made the garden." In every city the sahibs softened their architecture with gardens, and of all expressions of the imperial taste, the gardens were the most satisfactory. The English predilection for the paradise garden, nature unobtrusively coaxed into order, was richly encouraged in the tropics, where the imperial gardeners found plants readier than anything at home to intertwine and luxuriate in the profusion they preferred. This was a ruling race with green fingers. The great gardens of the British Empire were mostly botanical gardens, created for scientific purposes, but they were never mere open-air laboratories, while around their own houses, and in their public parks, the British lovingly grafted imperial cuttings to the root of English landscape art.

The best of the imperial gardens had an air of exuberance, as though their creators had been given *carte blanche*. The two famous botanical gardens of Ceylon, for instance, felt like English gardens magically released from the restraints of English taste and climate. Peradeniya, outside Kandy, was done to a Blenheim scale: the river Mahawali-ganga almost surrounded it, giving it a theatrical unity, and everything about it was lavish—royal palms, vast clumps of bamboo, greenhouses and wicker arbours veiled in creeper, an eerie grotto of an orchid house, flower gardens dramatically laid out, colour by colour in big bright slabs. Its high-altitude subsidiary, Hakgalla, was its antithesis. It stood secluded in the mountains beyond Nuriya Eliya, a favourite object of Grand Hotel excursions, and it was like an English garden in a dream, blurred and suggestive. Peradeniya was best seen on the evening of a sunny day, when the shadow gave depth to its grand manner, and threw the silhouettes of its palms nobly across the green. Hakgalla excelled in a Scotch mist in early morning, when its maze of little paths, thickets and hollows opened unexpectedly one after another through the haze. It was only just short of a wild garden, its foliage exquisitely checked on the brink of anarchy, and it was dominated by ferns—damp and lacy ground ferns, tangled rock ferns, and the beautiful tree ferns peculiar to Ceylon, whose leaves formed a high caparison, and dripped their rain-drops all around the edge.

The British had never stopped creating botanical gardens—those on the island of Dominica, in the West Indies, though already a superlative collection of tropical plants, had been founded only in 1891. The gardens at Sydney, which meandered delectably along the shores of the harbour, predated the city itself, for on the same site had been planted the flowers and vegetables brought out with the First Fleet of convicts in 1788: but the senior imperial gardens of all lay on the banks of the Hooghly at Cal-

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cutta, removed from the city's clutter on the other side of the river. Behind them passed the Grand Trunk Road, on the first stage of its march across India, and over their walls the masts and upperworks of ships could be seen, silently moving up and down the river. Into this retreat the British had brought tropical specimens from every part of the world—mahogany and Cuban palms, mangoes, plantains, giant South American creepers, tamarinds and casuarinas: and Bishop Heber wrote of the Calcutta botanical gardens that they would "perfectly answer to Milton's idea of Paradise, if they were on a hill instead of a dead flat."

The British had a genius for parks, and in the end perhaps it would be for these noble urban expanses, preserved with such a sense of scale and human values, that their Empire would longest be thanked. There was something very superior to the imperial parks. They seemed to announce a grand disregard of petty side-issues, like land values, or property rights, and at the same time a mastery of nature apparently so complete that their designers could afford to relax their discipline, and let things run a little wild within the stockade of the surrounding city. King's Park at Perth, indeed, was simply a slab of native bush, fenced about above the harbour and preserved for ever as the aborigines had known it: while Phoenix Park in Dublin, though it contained a zoo, a racecourse and several official residences, was so vast—1,750 acres—that it was virtually open country, its paths highways and its mansions country houses. The Maidan at Calcutta was just the opposite: in the centre of a tumultuous oriental metropolis (for by the 1890s the City of Palaces was scarcely recognisable) a huge ordered pleasure-garden, scrupulously British, with tennis courts, golf-links, bicycle tracks, cricket pitches, riding roads, innumerable statues of generals and administrators, and down at the river's edge, an ornamental pagoda, a substantial piece of loot from Burma.

The Maidan was originally no more than a clear field of fire for Fort William, but sometimes the creation of such a park showed astonishing self-denial. Nobody doubted that Vancouver, incorporated as a city in 1886, would one day be among the chief ports of the Americas. It was founded as the western terminus of the C.P.R., and was already booming. Yet in a particularly covetable part of the city area, beside the narrows which formed the harbour entrance, the city fathers established a park. It was to become, so many travellers thought, the most beautiful park in the whole world, half savage, half domestic, with water on three sides of it and the soft Pacific winds ruffling its trees —a damp west coast park, where the moisture steamed out of the tree-bark when the sun came out, and sometimes even the morning birds were to be seen preening their feathers in a haze of vapour. The great port grew all around it, but never encroached, and sentinel for ever at its gate stood the Queen's Governor-General of the day, Lord Stanley, with the inscription upon his plinth: "To the use and enjoyment of people of all colours, creeds and customs for all time, I name thee Stanley Park."[9]

THE GARDEN INSTINCT of the English did not always survive migration. The private houses of the simpler Australians and Canadians notably lacked greeneries—not just because of the climate, for public gardens thrived, but perhaps because life was too near the soil already, without bothering about herbaceous borders. The Briton fresh from Britain, though, as soon as he moved into a new bungalow, or set down the family baggage on a new small-holding, almost always got hold of some seeds or cuttings to make himself a garden. The gardens of Government Houses were often the only consolations for restless Governors' ladies, and tea among the orchids on the buffalo-grass was an imperial institution—the wildest dreams of Kew were the facts of Katmandu. Sir George Grey, the man the aborigines so loved, created a remarkable garden on the island of Kawau, in the Hauraki Gulf, north of Auckland. He built a house of concrete there, stocked it with a good library, and surrounded it with exotic foliage. He brought oaks from California, Norfolk Island pines, Chinese willows, pines from Tenerife, fibrous plants from Chile and Peru, silver trees from South Africa, camphor trees from Malaya—and all through the shrubberies,

[9] The successors of Empire have been sensible of all these garden glories. On the great green at Peradeniya, during World War II, Lord Mountbatten set up the headquarters of his South-East Asia Command, but the garden remains glorious, and now forms an appendage to the University of Ceylon along the road. The Sydney garden makes a backdrop for the city's bold new Opera House, the Dominica gardens were described by Mr. Patrick Leigh-Fermor, in 1950, as "the most perfect botanical gardens I have ever seen." Phoenix Park has passed unscathed through permutations of Empire and independence, and its zoo remains pre-eminent for the breeding of lions. The Maidan at Calcutta, though stripped of its plinthed Viceroys and trampled by the feet of a million angry demonstrators, remains at least an open space. When I speak of the travellers who consider Stanley Park the most beautiful of all, emphatically among them I number myself.

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to be glimpsed by the studious statesman from his library windows, ostriches and white-ringed Chinese pheasants stalked, and kangaroos queerly lolloped.

Most expatriate Britons, counting the months to home leave, had garden aspirations of a different kind. Love of their own country was very strong among this people; nostalgia and home-sickness were among their weaknesses. It was roses these transient imperialists pined for, stocks and honeysuckle, lavender hedges and spring daffodils. Up their little gardens sprang, hopeful around each bungalow, and there were rose-petals in bowls in the sitting-room, and nodding wallflowers beside the compound gate.

With luck, when the Empire-builder moved elsewhere, or went home for good at last, his successor loved the garden in his turn, so that it proliferated down the generations, and was immortalised in scrapbooks. If not it very soon languished. The weeds of the country started up triumphantly, tangled trees overcame the flower-beds, and presently all that was left in souvenir was a bramble of English roses gone wild in the undergrowth, their scent forgotten and their colours faded.

Before the Dance:

at Zuni

The dance
is not yet
and when it will begin
no one says:
the waiting
for the Indian
is half the dance,
and so they wait
giving a quality
to the moment
by their refusal
to measure it:
the moment
is expandable
it burns
unconsumed
under the raw bulbs
of the dancing chamber:
the Navajo faces
wear
the aridity of the landscape
and "the movement
with the wind
of the Orient and
the movement against
the wind
of the Occident"
meet
in their wrinkles:
they wait, sitting
(the moment)
on the earth floor
(is expandable)
saying very little
or sleep
like the woman
slipping along the wall
sideways
to wake
in the clangour of the pulse of time
at the beginning
drum . . .

Charles Tomlinson

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Nigel Dennis

The Pretty Drum and the Jolly Drumstick

(A story of Sumer)

The Queen of Love
Found a willow sapling
Torn by the spate
Of great Euphrates.

The Queen of Love
Put it in her garden;
When it was grown,
She cut it down.

The Queen of Love
Made from willow-wood
A pretty drum,
A jolly drumstick.

The Queen of Love
Gave King Gilgamesh
The pretty drum,
The jolly drumstick.

The King struts about,
Struts about, beating
His pretty drum
With his jolly drumstick.

The girls of Uruk
Get angrier every day
With the pretty drum,
The jolly drumstick.

They steal them away,
Throw them into Hell—
The pretty drum,
The jolly drumstick.

Gilgamesh weeps,
Says he'll die without
His pretty drum,
His jolly drumstick.

"Oh, with what a pit-a-pat
My pretty drumskin
Warmed to the rat-a-tat
Of my jolly drumstick."

Enkidu says to him:
"Don't fret, Gilgamesh!
I'll go to Hell and get
Your drum and drumstick."

Kissing him, the king says:
"Promise me, Enkidu,
That if you go to Hell
You'll observe the rules.

"Don't walk in
Wearing your sandals;
You'll vex the dead
Who are all barefooted.

"Don't walk in
With a clean robe on;
Dress in Hell
Is dusty wings.

"Don't scent yourself
With oils and spices;
Hell's only smell
Is crumbled bones.

"Don't march in
Waving your javelin;
Many down there
Were sent by javelins.

"Don't stride to and fro
Swinging a staff;
They'll fly from crannies
In awful panic.

"Don't shout out
In a bass voice;
The shouts of the dead
Are croaks at most.

"If you meet there
The wife you loved,
Don't hug her to you,
She'll be a spectre.

"If you meet there
The wife you loathed,
Don't slap her face,
It is a wraith.

"Don't kiss the little son
You loved so dearly;
Don't shake your fist
At the son you hated."

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Enkidu promises:
He drops down to Hell
For the pretty drum,
The jolly drumstick.

Once at the gates
He forgets his vows,
Straps on sandals,
Dons his best;

Strides in scented,
Waving his javelin;
Swings his staff,
Talks in a bellow;

Sees his dear wife,
Wraps her in his arms;
Sees the vixen,
Clouts her hard;

Sets his dear son
Upon his knee,
Strikes at the son
That hated him.

There's a whir of wings,
There's a press of shades;
Enkidu is changed to
A void image.

Gilgamesh grumbles,
Waiting for Enkidu,
For his pretty drum,
His jolly drumstick.

He asks wise Enki:
"What should I do?"
"Pray to Utu
Is what you should do."

He prays to Utu,
Lord of the Sun,
"Prithee, bore a hole,
See where they've gone."

Utu bores a hole,
Enkidu floats up it,
Golden motes
In Utu's sunbeam.

"Good day, Enkidu,
May I ask where
Are my pretty drum,
My jolly drumstick?"

"The Queen of Hell
Enjoys them now,
Taps a web of dust
With a wand of shadow."

Hagiwara Sakutarō

Night Train

In daybreak's feeble light
The fingerprints that sour
The glass of the sliding door
Glint desolately chill.

Rock ridges, barely white,
Are still, quicksilver-still.

No passengers yet wake.
The fagged electric light
Pants wearily. The sweet,
The too-sweet varnish-smell
And my cigar's stale smoke
Have made the morning vile.

Yet, if it seems to me
Vile, how much filthier
It must appear to her,
That wife of someone, met
Merely by rail-chance.

Haven't we
Passed Yamashima yet?

She turns her pillow's vent,
Watching with woman's eyes
Until the cushion sighs
As winded babies do.

In sudden grief we leant
Closer and closer to
And, so companioned,
We watched beyond the pane
Of that drab railway-train
The landscape gorge the light.

And columbines, beyond
Some village wall, were white.

Translated by Graeme Wilson

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NOTES & TOPICS

London Commentary

October for the Rebels

Student Barricades in Britain?

By MICHAEL BELOFF

ON THURSDAY I spoke at the annual humorous debate at the Oxford Union "which takes place so aptly, Mr. President, sir, before Whit weekend." On Friday I watched the races from my college boathouse. On Saturday I twisted till dawn by the fountains in Pembroke quad. The Union benches, the river banks, the College balls were thronged. Oxford in Eights Week—a communal and popular celebration of Zuleika Dobson, not Rudi Dutschke.

Two days later the lead story on front page and television screen announced the Oxford revolution. How shall I describe *The Storming of the Clarendon Building as Performed by the Inmates of Nuffield College Under the Direction In Absentia of Daniel Cohn-Bendit*? I had a seat in the front stalls on the sunny side of the Broad between Blackwell's and the New Bodleian. There were perhaps two hundred demonstrators gathered outside the heavy wrought-iron gates. Some I recognised as familiar figures of the Oxford Left of the early '60s, returned as if to some regimental reunion. A few young dons stood on the fringes. They seemed self-conscious; after all, they would be back at High Table in the evening. There was a speech or two, the occasional chant. The bowler-hatted bulldogs, as potentially aggressive as the Guards at Buckingham Palace, inspired trendy cries of *"CRS-SS!"* Then some young maenad infiltrated from the Radcliffe Camera end. The proctors were momentarily diverted (Clausewitz, not Clark Kerr, should be the bible of today's university administrators), the gates gave way, the group surged in to the corridors of power.

Five hours of sit-in later the authorities abolished the rule against the unlicensed distribution of political pamphlets which they had so provocatively refused to enforce the whole term. The demonstrators wended their way to tea with chants of *"Ho Ho Ho Chi Minh!"* It was fun for the tourists.

Thus campus revolution English-style. It is a long way from the Clarendon to Columbia. Warm June mornings have little in common with *les nuits noires de mai*. True, for several months the newspapers became afflicted by a nervous reflex that made them report every local campus incident, however trivial, as if it were part of some international conspiracy. The student page became as regular a feature as the sports column or the social diary. It only needed two drunken revellers to say "——— off!" to a college porter for Fleet Street editors to proclaim "Guevara lives!" Endless analysis decorated with a photographic frieze of the new prophets—Marcuse, Fanon, Reich, Debray (whose readership in my experience is almost wholly composed of leader-writers), and the Holy Trinity, Ho, Mao and Che—swelled the week-end reviews. We witnessed the apotheosis of Tariq Ali, who sprang to fame in the Grosvenor Square demonstration of March, which he had led with the ideals of a Guevara and the tactics of a Plaza-Toro. Threatening in sequence to invade the Bank of England, abduct an American deserter from the law courts, lead a march of half-a-million in protest about Viet Nam, and retire from public life, he was selected as the archetypal student leader, a remarkable achievement for one who had ceased to be a student three years ago, and whose devotion to study had not been the most obvious feature of a meteoric Oxford career.

Observers who fished for a tangible connection between English and foreign disturbances landed some monstrous red herrings. It was discovered that a number of the radical student leaders in this country were foreigners—Klein (Sussex), Bloom (LSE), Abel (Cambridge), are American, Adelstein (LSE) a South African, Munroe (Oxford) a West Indian, Tariq Ali (of no fixed university) a Pakistani. Some, though English, have awakened the xenophobic instincts of the Home Counties with alien names

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like Rosen (Oxford) or Triesman and Halberstadt (Essex). But others like the chieftains of Leeds and the Regent Poly respectively, Jack Straw and Jan Midwinter, make one feel that the true precedent is 1381 rather than 1789 or 1905.

International influences were detected in still more original ways. The *Sunday Telegraph* reporter informed us that the students of Hornsey had adopted an American spelling at their information *center*. Remembering that it was these rebel students who asserted that formal qualifications of literacy were superfluous for the artist, one can think of more obvious explanations. What of those banners outside the Law Courts that proclaimed "GUILFORD [*sic*] STUDENTS PROTEST"?

THE ENGLISH FEVER, however, was of an altogether less virulent strain. Widespread violence was not among its symptoms. Enoch Powell at Essex, Patrick Wall at Leeds, Denis Healey at Cambridge found some students who for the sake of politics passionate or perverse threatened to add injury to insult. A porter died of a heart attack during the LSE fracas of 1967; a solitary stone was hurled through a window of the Vice-Chancellor's residence at Essex in 1968. The interruption of a lecturer from Porton by Essex students excited alarm in the columns of the Beaverbrook and Berry press. The cool legal prose of the Gifford report drained it of drama. The Oxford revolt was preceded by a petition to the Privy Council. When the local authority at Guildford tried to expel the occupying students (some of whom were sustained in their siege by national assistance) they resorted not to pistol-toting police but to the judge in chambers. The security guards at Hornsey with their Alsatian dogs were seduced to the student cause by cups of tea. No wonder Cohn-Bendit went home disgusted. Yet from the first Government reaction when he arrived at Heathrow airport, one would have thought Lenin had come to the Finland station.

THE MASS MEDIA fed as much as they fed on the disturbances. Far more students sat in libraries than in administration buildings during the summer term. Four times as many Oxford undergraduates condemned in a round-robin the picketings of the proctors as participated in it. Sussex students refused by a large majority to strike when sanctions were visited on the Vietnik militants who had thrown paint over a visiting American official; the Union even refunded him the cost of a new suit. Three hundred students joined the "Free University" of Hull; three thousand retained their loyalty to the University itself. A unanimous request by York students for the resignation of Lord James of Rusholme was given wide coverage; only in the small print was it revealed that the unanimity pertained to some seventy students out of a total university population of seventeen hundred. Such figures lend a perspective to the English malaise. To quantify is to qualify.[1]

The campus rebels of Albion might mimic the tactics of their foreign counterparts (though *adagio* not *fortissimo*), but they could not pretend to their problems. An élite system of higher education—it is its scarcity that makes it a privilege, not a right—may be both socially and economically undesirable; but its institutions will be in consequence less impersonal, less productive of frustrations, than those of Berkeley or Nanterre or Rome. The publicised complaints of Essex students that their Vice-Chancellor's office was five minutes walk from the main campus complex sounded absurd to those familiar with the continental experience of absentee professors. On the political front there is a similar difference in scale. Where official opposition is non-existent, as in many African, Asian and Latin American countries, insignificant as in Germany, and to a lesser extent France, or non-representative of deprived sections of the community, as in America, student movements have had a vital role in stimulating a necessary controversy. The students who picketed an Oxford hairdresser for alleged discrimination may share the aims, but hardly the significance, of the students who participated in the Mississippi summer project of 1964. Moreover, the British student with his three-year course is on the average younger than his continental or American counterpart, which mutes the volume of his protest. The seeds of revolt in this country were, in my opinion, fertilised by post-graduate grants. But there has been little blood here, and little ideology. The local context has asked for calmer comment than it has received.

Even in the "revolution within the revolution" on the English campus there was no Movement, only movements. Many of the demonstrations were political in the orthodox tradition. The good brave causes were Racial Discrimination and the War in Viet Nam. Patrick Wall was mobbed at Leeds, shouted down at Kent, and had his invitation to speak at Warwick withdrawn because students found distasteful his views on Immigration and

[1] The perspective can also be illustrated in economic terms. According to estimates of the local authority the art college sit-in at Guildford caused £1,000 worth of local damage. The Paris revolt profoundly disturbed the French national balance of payments.

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Africa. Enoch Powell had his car damaged at Essex, and his wife threatened at Birmingham. James Callaghan at Nuffield and Duncan Sandys at Bradford encountered noisy hostility for their respective roles as architect of the Kenyan Immigration and opponent of the Race Relations Bills.

Opposition to the war in Viet Nam inspired the protests against the Prime Minister at Essex, Cambridge and Sheffield, against George Brown at Kent, and against the American diplomat at Sussex. It can be assumed that this was the focus of the demonstration against Denis Healey at Cambridge.

It sparked off, too, the troubles in Grosvenor Square in March and in Hyde Park in July, though these were scarcely the work of students alone, as a glance at the law reports will show. The precedents for such demonstrations were multiple, nor would their occurrence have made so many headlines in a less turbulent year.

THE SECOND VARIETY OF PROTEST had political roots but flowered into more parochial aims. The classic pattern involved a political demonstration, subsequent university disciplinary action, and a far larger demonstration against this action. Berkeley was the international, LSE the national model. At LSE the original controversy was over the appointment of Dr. Walter Adams, the wider rebellion over the punishment of David Adelstein. Sussex's troubles started with the measures taken against the paint throwers. Essex's convulsions sprang from the summary rustication of three of the germ warfare protesters, Oxford's rebels seized on the obsolete ban on the distribution of political pamphlets as their *casus belli*. In each case some ten times as many students participated in the second as in the first demonstration. "Student power" was a more potent source of upheaval than national politics.

Undiluted student power movements constituted a third variety of demonstration. Leicester, Hull, Keele, Aston, the Regent Polytechnic, and Cambridge were the scene of demands by the students for greater say in the running of university affairs, contaminated little (if at all) by wider aims. Minor episodes were spawned by more specific discontents. There were sit-ins and boycotts at York and Warwick against the high price and low quality of campus food. The Kent strike, anticipated by concessions, concentrated on the *exeat* rules, and the monetary charges levied on students who took their degrees *in absentia*. Finally, there were protests whose aims were primarily educational: the reorganisation of syllabi, the methods of study, instruction, and examination. Such themes were the chief concern of the rebel artists of Hornsey, Guildford, Croydon and Birmingham, and of the seething pupils of the Inns of Court. Even this cursory analysis shows that the cloth of dissent was cut in a quilt, not a seamless robe.

The boundaries between these various areas of protest were not of course precise. The *dramatis personae* overlapped, even if the plays were different. Those who were interested in social revolution were usually interested in student power, even if the reverse was patently not true. The Charter of the Radical Student Alliance (published in 1967) demanded in addition to educational reform that "students as an organised body must be able to take collective action on matters of general social concern." Some spokesmen were able to establish recondite connections between local and international problems which were not always apparent to the outsider. Thus Mr. Tom Fawthrop of Hull, a prominent *RSA* spokesman, could write: "No serious attack upon our educational system could be satisfactory without mentioning Viet Nam" (*Examination or Education?*, *RSA* pamphlet, 1968). Tariq Ali forswore his global interests to read a freedom poem at Hornsey. At Oxford the quondam members of the unilateralist *Committee of 100* fitted easily into the new student power *Committee of 90*.

WHAT WAS LACKING, however, was evidence of a general belief, so conspicuous abroad, that change on campus was intimately and necessarily connected with change beyond it; today the Senate, tomorrow Society. A small cadre of ideologues might equate the two, seeing the campus as both launching-pad and laboratory.

The rank and file did not. French students could identify with the Workers, American students with the Negroes. The limit of English disturbances was defined by the campus perimeter. At LSE in 1967 there had been an abortive effort to involve the Barbican labourers, at Essex in 1968 the builders on the site. At both Oxford and Sussex neighbourhood industrial disputes attracted the militant students; the comradeship was not reciprocated when it came to disputes within the university. Students themselves realised that their aims were diverse. Cambridge Marxists condemned the students of Hornsey for their introverted concern with specific issues while themselves planning such progressive manoeuvres as "leading the workers to invade the May Balls." The scorn was of the genre that Hampstead intellectuals reserve exclusively for their trades union "brothers."

There was such a distance between demands for sixpence off the price of coffees in a Teacher Training College canteen and for the total over-

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throw of the international capitalist establishment that the umbrella treatment which the long hot summer received failed to do justice to its rich variety. Writers imposed rather than extracted a pattern. I suspect that the confusion, the unwillingness or inability to disentangle the threads of student protest now inextricably woven together in the popular imagination, springs from the fact that there was indeed one unifying element. The similarity between the various incidents lies in method, not aims, in practice, not purpose. Transposed from street corner to campus is the new technique of protest; heard in quad and square alike is the new idiom of dissent. The March, the Banner, the chant of Slogans, the Sit-in bridge the gap that lies between political and parochial protest. Out with the Prime Minister or the Vice-Chancellor! ... Free Adelstein or Ambatielos! ... Sit in the embassy or the college hall! ... It is as much what students do as what they say that commands attention. It is their behaviour, not their beliefs, that is novel.[2]

THE UNCRITICAL SYMPATHY that the student protesters have won in certain quarters has in effect been achieved by this extravagance of method. It has been assumed that these tactics have been provoked by some intolerable tyranny—hence the notorious remark by the Secretary of State for Education that many universities had "authoritarian" régimes. In a letter to the *Listener* a leading Oxford rebel detailed his complaints about the university. College gates closed at 12.30. Permission had to be sought to leave the university during term time. There was a complicated booking system for rooms for meetings. The Proctors had summary powers of discipline (this last no longer wholly true). A couple of prejudice points about bump supper rowdies, and tipping scouts, and a sweeping, unevidenced condemnation of the university syllabus (presumably in every subject?). Without bothering to examine in detail the possible justifications, practical and administrative, for this vexatious set of regulations, I can only say that this is a slender excuse for direct action. There is no barbed wire in the cloisters, nor do the Proctors carry truncheons. This element of "overkill" is nowhere better exampled than on the Plateglass campuses where, from the first, *participation* was encouraged, but which have been as embroiled in controversy as the older, more conservative universities. The Revolution, if such it can be called, is one of rising expectations, not of absolute deprivation.

I am equally unable to feel any particular admiration for those whose protest encompasses a wider field than the university. The professional protestocrats are not necessarily more concerned with the condition of the world than their quieter contemporaries. It is nonsense to equate depth of feeling with violence of expression; it is, after all, the hollowest drums that make the loudest noise (though wind instruments might provide a more apt metaphor). Direct action demonstration, a necessary tactic in Capetown or Selma, is too often otiose in England. Do not the Viet Nam demonstrators alienate in this country far more than they convert? If it is morality that one seeks, I would prefer to look for it in the Young Volunteer Force than in the Revolutionary Socialists Student Federation. If it is efficacy, I would prefer to look abroad to the Students for McCarthy, who were prepared to submit to the disciplines of democratic politics. *"Neat and Clean with Gene"* was a striking motto, and those who were guided by it showed a greater interest in educating others than in affirming by themselves.[3]

IT IS ANYHOW NOTABLE that those who seek a brave new world are not careless of the benefits of the rotten old one. Student militants proclaim the abolition of money, but do not scruple to pocket the cheques that television and publishing houses thrust upon them. They champion the abolition of all hierarchy, wealth, and privilege—and demand higher university student grants. (Alas, poor Plowden—would that primary schools had so powerful a pressure group!) Hornsey students (described in the *Guardian* as "pentecostal" in vision) asked for —more ping-pong tables. A leading Oxford revolutionary denounced the university at the same time as he was asking for a higher research allocation. Destroy the system, comrades, but play it for all it's worth first.

How seriously do they intend change who at the end of the academic year leave the barricades and head for the beaches? Why the *coitus interruptus* in place of revolutionary orgasm? The truth is that students are sustained by the affluence that they feign to reject and are des-

[2] Militant students may be the disciples of philosophers but they are not philosophers themselves. It is second-hand stuff, be it Millenarian or Marxist, that they preach. The famous BBC programme *Students in Revolt*, a colloquy of the international leaders (Krippendorf, Ishi, Cohn-Bendit, *et al.*), was fat on phrase, thin on thought. See Anthony Smith in *The Listener*, 20 June 1968.

[3] Why did the Oxford picketers of the colour-conscious coiffeur deliberately dissipate the sympathy they had earned for themselves by singing the *Internationale* in court, and shouting *"Sieg Heil!"* at the ushers and policemen who tried to maintain some calm during the proceedings?

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tined to inherit. Indeed, in contrasting the materialist aims of the student power movement with the ascetic revolutionary rhetoric of some of its leaders, one is tempted to say not merely that the Emperor has no clothes but that he ought to be impeached for indecent exposure.

THERE IS SOMETHING of the sinister as well as of the cynical in much that has happened. The strategy of direct action is not merely abused by excessive and inappropriate employ, but is itself potentially dangerous. The reduction of complex issues to capsule slogans; the personalisation of issues (*"Hey! Hey! LBJ"* or "PEDAGOGIC GERONTOCRACY"), the careless use of inept insult (*"Crosland Is a Fascist!"*), a banner at Essex last year; or "The Chancellor is the walking incarnation of the military-industrial complex" from a recent Sussex pamphlet, are alien to any critical, especially to any university, society. The growth of intolerance is alarming, whether it be evidenced by the ever more common shouting-down of speakers, as Dr. Inch was at Essex, or the humourless refusal of a group of Oxford militants to participate in a seminar on their aims with anyone who (I quote from a letter) "did not share their *premise* that the purpose of a university was to promote social revolution."

The switch in tactics on campus from March to Sit-in is another portent. Marchers attempt to persuade by advertising their cause and inviting others to espouse it. Sitters-in attempt to persuade by inconveniencing those who do not agree with them—justified in Greensboro' but not in Guildford. As a passive display of force, it can only be countered by an active display of force, and most Vice-Chancellors to whom I spoke think that this is its primary purpose. It demands the expenditure of less energy and the support of fewer people to make it a powerful weapon, and it would be foolish for those reasons to believe that we have seen the last of it. Such protest is no longer a spur to action; it is action itself.

It is clear, moreover, that what for the majority may be undisciplined excesses for a minority is part of a planned and accepted campaign. I remember laughing at the theory of a Sussex friend that the militants of Brighton were those whose field of study was Latin America, because "They want to apply what they learn, just like engineers or lawyers. . . ." He was obviously right. A campus Sit-in may seem objectively a feeble parody of a guerrilla sortie (it may be doubted that Che Guevara would have been interested in lodgings prices in Canterbury), but some on the further shores of student politics can make the identification. In such circles words lose their accepted meaning. One must learn a *Newspeak* dialect.

TEACH-IN—a protest meeting in which all speakers put forward the same view on a problem commonly believed to have two sides.

FREE SPEECH—defined for me by a Sussex radical as "letting someone say what he likes, and then doing what you like to him." (For further enlightenment on the meaning of this phrase, one should read the sinuous equivocations of a staff-student Essex pamphlet produced in part exculpation of the Porton demonstration.

NON-VIOLENCE—Force, as used by Mr. Abel of Cambridge (quoted in the *Times*), "I don't think of using violence in terms of guns, just aggressive non-violence." Or the spokesman of the Hull squatters who said staff would be allowed to enter the building today "but their activities would be subject to student control and attempts to assert administrative authority would be non-violently resisted."

FREE UNIVERSITY—a university barred to ninety per cent of current dons. "Give me one example of a free university," said the Oxbridge don to the Essex rebel as the credits came on to the TV screen and the show went off the air. "Oh," replied the latter, "Peking of course." Or, as Mr. Fawthorp puts it,

> The way to combat specialisation is the promotion of human values inside our educational institutions. A few countries already understand this, and the cultural revolution in China has been mainly concerned with this question of putting values first and expertise second, such that if China is nothing else, it is probably the least apathetic society in the world (with Cuba).

RED SMEAR—which used to mean saying that someone who was not a communist was a communist, but now means saying that someone who is a communist is a communist.

WHAT, THEN, SHOULD universities do? There is no doubt that many of the reforms for which the students agitate, if peripheral to matters of real importance, could be expedited with profit.

Let students participate on various committees, and share the burden of ephemeral administration. Their representatives are conspicuously competent on the Plateglass campuses, even if they become divorced from those they represent. (*Us* turns quickly into *Them*.) I suspect that few will relish the boredom of bureaucracy, their metamorphosis from politicians to administrators, even if "face" is satisfied—I would have done anything to keep off committees in my student days. I suspect, too, that few realise with what minor matters most university committees are concerned—the siting of new buildings, library hours, etc. The basic problems of the modern university are financial—the cutbacks announced on 12 August were

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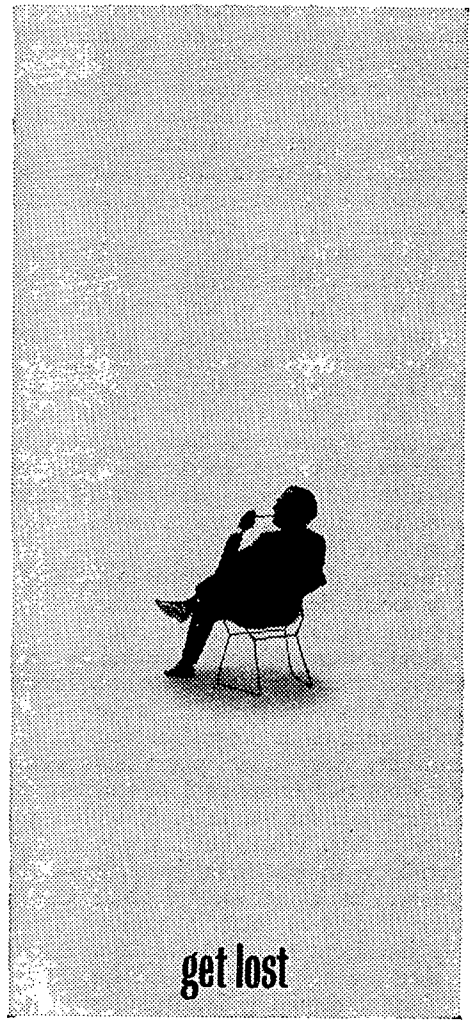
the fifth in three years—still more those of other institutions of higher education. The student power movement feeds on the material inadequacies but it cannot solve them. When students sit on Senate, and find the purse strings held by the UGC, their disappointment may be like that of the Labour Government, taking over the commanding heights of the economy and finding that the real decisions were taken by the gnomes of Zurich.

Allow students full control over their extra-curricular activities, and let them help dispense the campus law. (This is all good public school stuff: look at "Pop's" role in Eton.) Infuse the disciplinary process with natural justice. (The Warden of All Souls writing in *The Listener* has suggested that the apparatus of the Court Room would destroy the relationship of confidence that exists between don and student. With respect one can only reply that the existence of such demands shows that it has already broken down.) Abolish all rules that savour of infringements of civil liberties. Let students be subject to the common law. If they demand that they should not be treated differently, let them be treated the same. (Recently it has appeared that some students were acquiring a kind of franchisal immunity!) With the Latey report in mind, cease to act *in loco parentis*. There is no need for rules that are not designed either to make sure that students are working or that they are not preventing others from so doing. In a phrase—clear the battlefield of irrelevancies.

What, then, is not negotiable? For it may be obvious that these prosaic reforms will not satisfy the revolutionaries, whose aspirations have changed from representation (The *RSA* charter of 1967) to control (*Teach Yourself Student Power* by Adelstein and Atkinson, 1968). The Vice-Chancellors are already holding discussions with the National Union of Students. An LSE lecturer graphically informed me, "The NUS bears the same relationship to the student power movement as the Saigon government does to the Vietcong. . . ." There are underground rumours that one university is to be the focus of a massive Columbia-style campaign; in Oxford that it will be one college, doubtless All Souls.

Much of the argument has proceeded on the basis of false analogy. Universities not factories; but if they are to be likened to them, it is the teachers and not the students who are offering their labour in the service of others. If universities truly were what in theory they purport to be, a group of scholars pursuing in community the grail of knowledge, then the student claims to share control of the university might make sense. But they clearly are not. Some teach. Some learn. The organisation must re-



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flect this division of function. It is not "undemocratic" that students do not decide the syllabus or appoint the dons, any more than it is undemocratic that patients do not run the hospital, or advise on how to carry out operations. The debate is being conducted in language inappropriate to its themes.

Scientists, it is worth noticing, have largely boycotted the student revolution. At Essex it was the chemists alone who continued to work throughout the week-long strike. This is because "the two cultures" is a matter not just of content of study, but of methods of work. Student power has no meaning in the laboratory: no one doubts the need for leadership by the more experienced of the less experienced. Rutherford in the Cavendish is the model. Crick and Watson with their iconoclastic behaviour were of course exceptions, but they were more than simply alpha students. There is a considerable difference between even a double first and the Double Helix.

Why apply different standards to the humanities or social sciences? In any academic field of study one cannot make a fair choice of what one should learn without knowing the range of choice. When I was up at Oxford, there was a tremendous enthusiasm for more European history among the undergraduates of the school. Meanwhile, year after year the examiners pointed out that under 10% of students could speak any one foreign language with any degree of facility. What does a first-year student of sociology, straight from school, know about sociology, let alone society? Isn't the real answer "Not very much"? Students are certainly intelligent educated people with views, but they are less educated, and for the most part less academically intelligent, than those who teach them.

If it would be a betrayal of responsibility to allow students to dictate the syllabus of universities on the basis of transient and modish fashions (Chinese history, the Modern Novel, more Sociology), it is a dereliction of duty not to hold public and critical discussion with students of the syllabus that is chosen. If dons won't justify current practice and thinking, then they must take some of the blame for further rebellion. If they can't, then maybe the rebels have a case.

THE WEAPONS OF THE UNIVERSITY should be those of argument and open controversy. One of the most striking features of the summer troubles was the silence of the university authorities. The furtive search for legal remedies against Quisling lecturers, or the robust hope (expressed to me by one Vice-Chancellor) that rugger-club vigilantes will lead a counter-attack, will do little to solve the crisis. The urgent need is to "sell the product," not only to the extremists, but also to the worried mass of students whose most pervasive anxiety is about the relevance of what they are doing to the world into which they graduate, and especially to the "welfare puddings" whose apathy about the issue should be an equal source of concern to teachers. Dons who haunt the television studios and the antechambers of Whitehall instead of concentrating on the next generation bear a large responsibility for much of the "silent revolution" of the anxious and the apathetic. The answer to all students should be in terms of change, not of conservatism.

THIS PROBLEM of communication has wider implications. If the students protest against society, society is starting to protest against the students. There is a whiff of Reaganism in the air. Grants and endowments are being withdrawn. Town writes to the newspaper about gown. Local authorities grumble. Enoch Powell lets loose a characteristic salvo. (It must be tempting for the university authorities to take students at their word and share government not only with them but with every campus worker. Scout power would really take Oxford back to the days of Jowett.) University authorities must explain the functions of the university both within and without the campus.

The very fact that students worry about questions of university control is itself significant. After all, five years ago there was scarcely a whisper about a much fuller panoply of university authority. Nor were students at the turn of the decade less radical in their views, certainly not less interested in political problems than the students of today. CND attracted a wider spectrum of dissenters than the war in Viet Nam. As I recall, the conflict between Gaitskellite and Unilateralist, between Tory radicals and Tory squires, the vigour of the Liberals in the Orpington dawn, provided a rich diet of political dispute. The leadership of the student population was at that time dominated by the last of the National Service generation, 23–24-year-olds: no senior in years to the graduate rebels of today, in experience of life outside the confines of the educational system older by far. The areas of debate were precise and specific, the relationship of crime, morality and punishment, the quality of *admass* life (Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams were the gurus), the pace of imperial retreat. There was a fervent belief that the advent of a Labour government would be a panacea; and even a "consensus" policy between Tory and Labour students would have included abolition of the

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public schools and the House of Lords, abandonment of an independent deterrent, curbing of press monopolies, and, overall, a radical approach to political and social problems. It is without doubt the alienation from politics that has led both to the ideological extremism and the simultaneous campus-concerned introversion of so many of today's students.

This is not a problem that universities can solve, but it is one that they ought to appreciate. They should base their philosophy on two tenets: firstly, that knowledge is the source of power; secondly, that reason is the best agent of change in human affairs. It is knowledge that will enable graduates to crack the problems of malnutrition and disease, to plan habitable cities, to bring justice to all, that will give them the tools to solve problems, and not merely to acknowledge that they exist. It is academic values, the spirit of free enquiry, of open-mindedness, of humility, of unscrupulousness, of accuracy, that should inform any search for such knowledge. The militant student today appears to spurn this philosophy. The cry is for action now, not preparation for action later. In this real sense he is no longer a student at all, since he clearly rejects knowledge as a precondition of any meaningful activity. Truth, moreover, is no longer sought, but revealed; the contempt for free speech and free thought is demonstrated as much in his actions as in his words. Were he ever to capture the university, it would cease to be a university at all.

A UNIVERSITY EDUCATION must do more than fit someone for specific function in society. It must make him question the society into which he moves. We need experts, but experts with purpose. My guess is that one reason for student unrest is the increasing emphasis of purely practical disciplines in the university curriculum, and the changing fashion in many academic subjects that has gutted them of their former concern with values. The new history is a matter of statistics rather than synthesis, the new philosophy one of linguistic analysis rather than moral inquiry. The new economics is mathematical and abstract with its complex equations and model-building. All that is implied in the notion of political economy has been relegated to the lumber room. The new politics is behavioural and psephological; political theory is outmoded. The English teaching of law with its positivist traditions is hostile to a study of law's purpose. Sociologists may well be in the van of the revolution not because their subject teaches them a coherent criticism of society, but because it fails to do so. Or is there a socialist interpretation of sociology that

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is as potent a force for change as the Whig interpretation of history used to be? One of the ironies of the current situation is that the passionate students of sociology with their bold affirmations and moralistic language will soon be solemnly reduced by expert analysis to a set of statistics, detailing their class, sex, age, etc., etc. And yet one asks oneself—will these rows of figures tell us what the student revolution is all about?

In what way are universities to be reshaped now that their social function has gained at the expense of their academic one? Are they to be secular temples or technocentric think-tanks? To judge properly the nature of their new role in society is as difficult as to solve the problems that their progeny will be called upon to face, the problems caused by nuclear stockpiling, by urbanisation and pollution, by the growth of cybernetics with its awesome implications, by starvation and neurosis, by the ever more various conflicts of social, racial and religious groups which are not susceptible of simplistic analysis and treatment. The student revolt is irrelevant to such matters of major concern—it is a symptom, not a critique. The questions raised are much deeper than a mere "What's it all about?", and the challenge is more subtle than "It's a bloody awful world." The affirmation called for is more profound than the words of Tom Lehrer's folk singer, "I'm in favour of peace, love and justice, unlike the rest of you squares. . . ." It is better to question, comment and affirm than to remain silent and blind; given three years with the luxury of unfettered time, one ought to display some reaction to the society around. But if there are young and old who see in the mere fact of the student revolt new hope for us all, it is because the young are arrogant and the old feel guilty. Students, after all, have long protested against the world. It is the duty of the graduates to change it.

White Lady or She-Devil?

Reflections on Academic Fetishism — By James Wellard

In 1917, a German prospector named Reinhardt Maack spent the night in a cave in the Brandberg Mountains of South West Africa. Maack was at the time hard-pressed. He was short of food and water and so was in no condition to study the Bushman paintings on the rock face of the cave where he was sheltering. However, one of the pictures was so impressive that he did feel impelled to make a rough sketch in the last page of his notebook, a sketch which he showed to his white colleagues on his return to civilisation. What he had seen and sketched was the portrait of a figure later known as *The White Lady of the Brandberg*—the most famous painting in the whole gallery of Bushman rock art.

Maack's discovery proved to be sensational on two counts. First, the portrait was aesthetically of supreme interest; and secondly, it started a controversy which led to the suspicion that the experts, though in the dark themselves, were trying to blind the rest of us with science. In fact, looking at this particular Bushman painting and other specimens of cave art, one began to wonder if many of the arguments advanced by the anthropologists were not in the nature of those pious frauds usually associated with the medieval theologians. Does not the myth created around *The White Lady of the Brandberg* remind us of the legends that have sprung up around the lives of the saints and apostles—legends that the church historians have often elevated into "historical fact"? And are we laymen entitled to question these "historical facts," even, for instance, the residence, martyrdom, and burial of Saint Peter in Rome—let alone the provenance of this mysterious female in the Brandberg cave? Or are we brow-beaten into silence by the weight of academic disapproval?

Who, or what, then, is *The White Lady of the Brandberg*? She is depicted as the central character in a loosely composed frieze of men and animals—she striding purposefully forward,

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carrying what looks like a flower in her right hand, a bow and arrows in her left. The species of flower cannot be identified, and some observers say that it is half an ostrich egg in some kind of cup. She wears a dark-red head-dress, or wig, a short-sleeved brown jerkin ornamented with beads, a red belt, pink tights, close-fitting trunks, leggings, and white moccasins edged with red. The best portrait of her can be seen in the frontispiece of the first volume of the Abbé Breuil's *The Rock Paintings of Southern Africa* (1966).

Dressed like that, she certainly cannot be a Bushwoman; so who is she, and what is she doing?

The experts were naturally puzzled, because the bulk of cave paintings, whether African or European, had already been classified into neat scientific categories. Thus, paintings and engravings of animals were lumped together under such general headings as "ritual magic," the theory being that animals were drawn by primitive artists as part of a religious ceremony intended to confer supernatural powers on the hunters. The fact that there are tens of thousands of these animal pictures all over the caves and shelters of Europe and Africa was ignored; and the prosaic explanation that they were executed for the amusement of the artists and the information of the spectators was dismissed, though the practice of scratching *graffiti* on a nice smooth rock face has always been, and still is, a pastime of cave-dwellers, nomads, caravaners, goat-herds, and the like the world over. "Ritual magic," however, sounds more impressive in scientific journals. It is an evocative expression and enables the expert to write some academic purple prose like this:

> The man who kills an animal for his own subsistence is most likely to feel a sense of awe when beholding its striking beauty; how much more must this animal have meant to him when he thought of it as a divine being! Nevertheless, the decisive factor is still the part played by each animal in the great drama of cosmic change.... There can be no doubt that these pictures also played a part in the propaedeutics of religious beliefs.[1]

One wonders what a Stone Age hunter, stalking his supper with nothing but a throwing-stick, would have replied to this.

"Ritual magic," then, was the orthodox explanation of why primitive man drew portraits of animals. A stronger term was needed for his representations of human beings in their more intimate activities. How else to explain, or

[1] "The Rock Art of South Africa," by Erik Holm, in *The Rock Art of the Stone Age* (1961).

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explain away, the depictions of the sexual act? The term invented was "fertility rites." Alas! The first European travellers to see these down-to-earth pictures, whether on the rocks of Africa, or on the walls of Pompeii, or in the Etruscan tombs—not being familiar with the expression "fertility rites" and not knowing that they were looking at profoundly spiritual works of art—turned hurriedly away, shocked by their remote ancestors' depravity. A French doctor, for instance, reporting in 1847 the existence of cave drawings in the Atlas Mountains, asserts that "these lascivious pictures will never issue from our sketch-book." It so happens that the Frenchman had got it wrong. Indignation prevented him from properly examining what turns out to be a medley of men and animals. But the twentieth-century experts, scornful of this Victorian prudery, soon put our minds at rest. This sort of thing—copulation in one form or another—was merely a "fertility rite." Even the unrestricted prostitution permitted in the Carthaginian temples of Astarte was explained by this term; and, for all one knows, the drawings over the cells in the Pompeii brothel are interpreted by some up-to-the-minute social historian in the same light. "Fertility rites," like "ritual magic," is an impressive phrase.

It only remained to find a suitably clinical label for the prehistoric "pin-up girls," those plump females, sometimes sculpted in clay (the Willendorf "Venus" is the archetype), sometimes depicted in the act of intercourse, and sometimes drawn in the coitus position, though primitive artists had the same technical problems here that all artists had, up to the early Renaissance, in foreshortening supine figures. All such depictions of wanton or submissive females were made academically respectable under the term "maternity cult."

"RITUAL MAGIC," "fertility rites," "maternity cult"—*The White Lady of the Brandberg* did not, unfortunately, fit into any of these pigeon-holes. It followed that one had to be specially created for such an important picture, and the obvious person to do this was the world authority on cave art, the Abbé Henri Breuil of the *Institut*. And so, in due course, the Abbé and his assistant Miss Mary Boyle were invited to South Africa to solve the mystery of the woman in the short-sleeved jerkin and the pink tights.

The conclusions arrived at by the Abbé, based largely on Miss Boyle's prolonged research, was that the *White Lady*, since she was dressed in what appeared to be the costume of a Cretan bull-dancer, must have represented "the Isis-Diana in the Lesser Mystery of Egypt." Once this theory had been advanced, laymen—and, for that matter, the South African ethnologists—were obliged to keep their opinions to themselves, especially as a mass of evidence was produced to support the "historical fact." Apuleius' *The Golden Ass* was quoted as showing that "the whole world worships Isis under many changing shapes, with varied sites, and by many diverse names." Again, the style of the *White Lady*'s coiffure was shown to be comparable with an Egyptian sculpture of the 5th century. Moreover, other figures in the frieze were identified with Egyptian gods and priests; and there was much learned talk about Sebek the Crocodile Man, Set the god of evil, Horus, Thoth, and the Papyrus of Nesi-Ta-Neb-Ashru. Miss Boyle concluded:

> Several features of the painting reproduce so precisely the details mentioned as forming part of the ceremonial in the religious procession of the Second Mystery of Egypt, the resurrection myth of Isis, Osiris, and Horus, that it may reasonably be regarded as a sacred painting.... If this is the case, the artist must have known that in painting such a picture outside the sacred precincts, he risked the death penalty imposed on all initiates who revealed a Mystery.

The Abbé Breuil set his seal of approval on this curious hodge-podge of Egyptology and classical mythology by adding:

> The fact that the *White Lady* is the best armed of all and the only one with an arrow at the ready tends to support other reasons for thinking she may be the Diana-Isis known in Crete and Egypt.

However, there were not lacking a few murmurs of dissent. Certain South African students of Bushman art were unhappy with what they felt was a "European" interpretation of the painting, and some of them went so far as to suggest that the *White Lady* was nothing other than the caricature of a woman missionary, dating not from B.C. 1500, as the Breuil-Boyle theory suggested, but from around 1850 A.D. This gives a chronological difference of 3,300 years, so one or the other of the experts must be wrong. The layman, however, is permitted to take his pick: the Isis-Diana of the Second Mystery of Egypt—or a European missionary of the last century. What it is not proper for him to do is to draw his own conclusions, write an article, and submit it to a learned journal. The experts would be down on him like a ton of bricks.

SOME TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO, Edward Gibbon, an outsider as far as the schools were concerned, challenged the right of the

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academicians to regard their particular field of learning as a monopoly of the "in-group" to which they belonged. Examining the British universities and their faculties, he wrote:

> The spirit of the monopolists is narrow, lazy, and oppressive; their work is more costly and less productive than that of independent artists; and the new improvements so eagerly grasped by the competition of freedom are admitted with slow and sullen reluctance in those proud corporations, above the fear of a rival and below the confession of an error.

Typical Gibbon, one could say; and his adversaries did say so. "We can discover but slender traces of profound and exquisite erudition, of solid criticism and accurate investigation," declared Dr. Edwards before the University of Cambridge, commenting on *The Decline and Fall*. "But we are too frequently disgusted by vague and inconclusive reasoning; by unseasonable banter and senseless witticisms; by embittered bigotry and enthusiastic jargon; by futile cavils and illiberal invectives. . . ."

But the greatest of British historians cannot be dismissed that easily. On the contrary, his criticism of the monopolists is even more valid today than it was in the eighteenth century. The non-academical who doesn't think so should try airing his views at a meeting of historians, archaeologists, psychologists, or educationalists.

How jubilant Gibbon would have been over Michael Ventris' triumph in deciphering Linear B, for Ventris was precisely what Gibbon meant by an "artist." Yet Ventris himself was obviously aware of, and not a little intimidated by, the monopolists who accepted as "historical fact" the Minoan language postulated by Evans of Knossos. Indeed, we hear that those classicists who questioned the orthodoxy were punished by being excluded from digging in Greece, which is comparable to prohibiting a professional writer from publishing his work. Hence Ventris wasted a great deal of time in trying to find an Etruscan base for "Minoan"; and even when he was actually on the brink of a break through, he described his *Work Note 20*, "Are the Knossos and Pylos Tablets written in Greek?" as "a frivolous digression." In fact, it is clear from reading his *Work Notes* and correspondence that he did his best to refute his own irrefutable findings, in order to placate the savants. Significantly, after referring to what he calls "the Greek chimera," he concludes: "if pursued, I suspect that this line of decipherment would sooner or later come to an impasse, or dissipate itself in absurdities." The "line," however, was pursued, because Ventris had no career as a professor to jeopardise and no reputation as a scholar to lose.

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THERE ARE, ADMITTEDLY, few inspired amateurs like Michael Ventris; but more to the point, there are increasingly fewer disciplines in which they can expect to be given a hearing by the specialists. There remains one subject, however, which continues to attract the outsider, whence the professionals' rather bad-tempered definition of it as "the favourite playground of cranks." This is Etruscology, the study of which seems to produce nothing but academic brawling. The climax of this mock-war came in 1875 when Wilhelm Corssen published his *Über die Sprache der Etrusker* in which he "proved" that Etruscan belonged to the Indo-European family of languages and in 1876 when the equally eminent philologist Wilhelm Deecke "proved" that it did not.

By the mid-twentieth century, the professionals had given up their internecine warfare and retreated into a sort of philological Never-Never land whose boundaries were marked by warning signs few adventurers dared disregard. For Etruscan was now spoken of as belonging to the "pre-Indo-European linguistic group," or to a "proto-Indo-European stratum," or even a "peri-Indo-European structure." This last definition was calculated to silence the Etruscomaniacs once and for all, for it was rightly assumed that nobody outside the schools could have the faintest idea of what the expression meant—for the very good reason that it means nothing at all.

M. Raymond Bloch states the case for the career Etruscologists categorically in his *Les Étrusques* (1954):

> The naïve pretensions of amateurs dazzled by the seeming success of their own essays in translation have done little more than to attract unmerited scorn from a few intelligent people.

Such arrogance comes ill from the successor of Corssen who translated Etruscan from bogus Latin, from Bugge who discovered the key in Armenian (false), Konow in Dravidian (false), and so on and so forth. Why, then, should the amateurs be blamed for doing the same thing and accused of misleading the public, particularly since it was an amateur who wrote the best book on the subject, namely George Dennis whose *Cities and Cemeteries of Etruria*, published in 1848, has never been superseded?

THERE IS a corollary to all this: it is the growing predominance of Gibbon's "spirit of monopoly" in almost every department of life and learning. One sees it notably exemplified in the arts where the monopolists have reached such heights of arrogance that the average outsider scarce dare express a personal opinion at all. The shamans of painting, music, theatre, film, ballet, and so forth *tell* him what is good in either a supercilious or scolding manner which brooks no opposition. Thus the amateur is somehow made to feel an ignoramus until the extraordinary state of affairs is reached where educated people stand gaping at grotesque daubings which they are told are works of art, or at mounds of scrap iron said to be sculpture. Pictures produced by a donkey waving his tail over a canvas and discarded machinery dumped in an exhibition by leg-pulling students receive solemn attention and respectful praise from a brain-washed public. Concert audiences listen to a symphony composed by a computer linked to a roomful of typewriters, or even to a composition which has no sound at all. If some bold huckster of the arts presented a concert played by chimpanzees strapped to musical instruments, one may be sure that some critics would find suitable clichés to make us believe that new vistas in aesthetic experience had been opened to us. "Ritual magic" has really come into its own.

Could not one go on to say that this "spirit of monopoly" in the fields of learning and art has also become characteristic of almost all modern life, certainly of the relationship between the governors and the governed? What, for instance, of the draconian decisions handed down by governments and their departments, decisions which the average citizen (that is, the amateur) no longer bothers to challenge? For what is the use of protest when real democracy, government by consent and not monopoly, ended with the New England town meetings in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries?

Yet one would think that on the municipal level there would still be some semblance of participation by the private individual. There is scarcely any. We even have no say in what kind of street lamps should disfigure our streets, let alone what kind of schools we want for our children. The decisions are made for us by the specialists—electricians in the former case, educationalists in the latter. So, in the end, we accept, without protest, our hideous cities, our comprehensive schools, our mindless painting, our computerised music, our anti-literature, and, of course, the Isis-Diana myth of the Second Egyptian Mystery.

I am reminded of the rock art specialist who, hopefully expecting endorsement of the orthodox theory about "fertility rites," asked an Australian aborigine what the painting of a squatting figure symbolised. The aborigine laughed contemptuously and said, "That is a she-devil lying down for a man."

The contemptuous laughter of the savage is a fitting comment on the pretentiousness of a great deal of twentieth-century culture.

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On Sincerity

From Wordsworth to Ginsberg — By DONALD DAVIE

KENNETH REXROTH declares, introducing *Selected Poems of D. H. Lawrence*:

> Hardy could say to himself: "Today I am going to be a Wiltshire yeoman, sitting on a fallen rock at Stonehenge, writing a poem to my girl on a piece of wrapping paper with the gnawed stub of a pencil," and he could make it very convincing. But Lawrence really was the educated son of a coal miner, sitting under a tree that had once been part of Sherwood Forest, in a village that was rapidly becoming part of a world-wide disembowelled hell, writing hard, painful poems, to girls who carefully had been taught the art of unlove. It was all real. Love really was a mystery at the navel of the earth, like Stonehenge. The miner really was in contact with a monstrous, seething mystery, the black sun in the earth.

And again:

> Hardy was a major poet. Lawrence was a minor prophet. Like Blake and Yeats, his is the greater tradition. If Hardy ever had a girl in the hay, tipsy on cider, on the night of Boxing Day, he kept quiet about it. He may have thought that it had something to do with "the stream of his life in the darkness deathward set", but he never let on, except indirectly.

This is outrageous, of course. In part, at least, it is meant to be; it is outrageously unfair to Thomas Hardy. But then, fairness is what we never find from anyone who at any time speaks up for what Rexroth is speaking for here. Are prophets fair-minded? Can we expect Jeremiah or Amos or Isaiah to be *judicious*? D. H. Lawrence was monstrously unfair; so were 19th-century prophets like Carlyle and Ruskin; so was William Blake unfair to Reynolds and to Wordsworth. And some of them, some of the time—perhaps all of them, most of the time—know that they are being unfair, as I think Kenneth Rexroth knows it. Fair-mindedness, Lawrence seems to say, is not his business; if judiciousness is necessary to society, it is the business of someone in society other than the prophet or the poet.

"The prophet *or* the poet."... For, although I've gone along with Rexroth for the moment in accepting this distinction, I am not really convinced by it. For what *is* the distinction which Rexroth has drawn, between Hardy and Lawrence? As he presents it to us, it has nothing to do with prophecy, though he seems to think it has. The distinction is quite simply that when "I" appears in a poem by Lawrence, the person meant is directly and immediately D. H. Lawrence, the person as historically recorded, born in such and such a place on such and such a date; whereas when "I" appears in a poem by Hardy, the person meant need not be the historically recorded Thomas Hardy, any more than when King Lear in Shakespeare's play says "I," the person meant is William Shakespeare.

When Rexroth introduces the notion of a tradition of *prophecy*, above all when he puts in that tradition the most histrionic of modern poets (W. B. Yeats), he is shifting his ground abruptly and very confusingly. What he is saying to start with is simply and bluntly that Lawrence is always sincere, whereas Hardy often isn't; and Lawrence is sincere by virtue of the fact that the "I" in his poems is always directly and immediately himself. In other words, the poetry we are asked to see as greater than Hardy's kind of poetry, though it is called "prophetic" poetry, is more accurately described as *confessional* poetry. Confessional poetry, of its nature and necessarily, is superior to dramatic or histrionic poetry; a poem in which the "I" stands immediately and unequivocally for the author is essentially and necessarily superior to a poem in which the "I" stands not for the author but for a *persona* of the author's —this is what Rexroth asks us to believe.

THIS IS, as he well knows, to fly in the face of what seemed, until a few years ago, the solidly achieved consensus of opinion about poetry and the criticism of poetry. That consensus of

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opinion seemed to have formed itself on the basis of insights delivered to us by the revolutionary poets of two or three generations ago. It had taken the idea of the *persona* from Ezra Pound, and the closely related idea of the *mask* from W. B. Yeats; and it had taken from T. S. Eliot the ideas that the structure of a poem was inherently a *dramatic* structure, and that the effect of poetry was an impersonal effect. It had elaborated on these hints to formulate a rule, the rule that the "I" in a poem is *never* immediately and directly the poet; that the-poet-in-his-poem is always distinct from, and must never be confounded with, the-poet-outside-his-poem, the poet as historically recorded between birth-date and date of death. To this rule there was a necessary and invaluable corollary: that the question "Is the poet sincere?"—though it would continue to be asked by naïve readers—was always an impertinent and illegitimate question. This was the view of poetry associated with the so-called New Criticism, and (although it has been challenged from other directions than the one we are concerned with) it is still the view of poetry taught in our university classrooms. Must we now abandon it?

I THINK we must—or rather, that we may and must hold by it for the sake of the poetry which it illuminates; but that we can no longer hold by it as an account which does justice to *all* poetry. It illuminates nearly all the poetry that we want to remember written in England between 1550 and about 1780; but it illuminates little of the poetry in English written since 1780. For my own part, I often bitterly regret having to give it up as regards the poetry of our own time. I see too clearly the grievous consequences of doing so, of having the question of "sincerity," which we thought to be safely scotched, once again rearing its head as a central question. Anyone can see these consequences—*see* them, not *foresee* them; because they are with us already. For the question has been settled already, off campus; and it is only in the university classrooms that anyone any longer supposes that "Is he sincere?" is a question not to be asked of poets. Confessional poetry has come back with a vengeance; for many years now it is the poetry that has been written by the most serious and talented poets, alike in America and in Britain.

Consider only the case of Robert Lowell, probably the most influential poet of his generation. It is a very telling case indeed: trained in the very heart of New Criticism by Allen Tate, Lowell made his reputation by poems which are characteristically dramatic monologues, in which the "I" of the poem was hardly ever to be identified with the historical Robert Lowell. Then in the mid-'fifties came his collection called *Life Studies* in which the "I" of the poems nearly always asks to be taken, quite unequivocally, as Robert Lowell himself. At about the same time, from under the shadow of Rexroth himself, came Allen Ginsberg's prophetic-confessional poem, *Howl!* And ever since, confessional poems have been the order of the day, with the predictable consequences—the poem has lost all its hard-won autonomy, its independence in its own right, and has once again become merely the vehicle by which the writer acts out before his public the agony or the discomfort (American poets go for agony, British ones for discomfort) of being a writer, or of being alive in the 20th century. Now we have once again poems in which the public life of the author as author, and his private life, are messily compounded, so that one needs the adventitious information of the gossip-columnist to take the force or even the literal meaning of what, since it is a work of literary art, is supposedly offered as public utterance. And woe betide that poet whose life, when the gossip-columnist-reviewer goes to work on it, does not reveal fornications and adulteries, drug-addictions, alcoholism, and spells in mental homes. "What?" the reviewer exclaims, "when it appears that your poems have cost you so little, when the writing of them has apparently disorganised your life hardly at all, can you expect me to give them as much attention as the poems of Miss *X* here, whose vocation drove her last week to suicide?"

If this is what can happen when the question of sincerity once again becomes central to the judgment of poetry, how much we must wish that we could hold firm to those precepts of the New Criticism which ruled that question out of order. Why not? If the universities are the bulwarks of that more decorous view of poetry, what more proper than that the universities should resist with disdain the dishevelled sensationalism of the literary worlds of London and New York? And after all, aren't most of these new confessional poets very bad poets? Yes, they are; as most poets of any kind, at any given moment, are bad poets. But Robert Lowell isn't. In fact, it won't wash: the question of sincerity can never again be out of order. For as we see now, even in the heyday of the *persona* and of impersonality in poetry, there were poets writing who would not fit the doctrine and who came off badly in consequence. Ezra Pound, the very man who introduced the concept of *persona*, was one of those who came off badly. His *Pisan Cantos*, written late in his career, are confessional poems, and they have been esteemed by many who find all or most of the rest of Pound unreadable. Who shall say

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those readers are wrong? William Carlos Williams wrote confessional poems which a criticism evolved to do justice to T. S. Eliot could get no purchase on. Thomas Hardy, for all that Kenneth Rexroth herds him in with the poets of the *persona*, in fact came off badly at the hands of a criticism which based itself on the *persona*. And there is, indeed, D. H. Lawrence. Was Lawrence a poet at all? The New Criticism, true to its lights, decided for the most part that he wasn't. But he wrote, along with too much that is messy and strident, "River Roses" and "Gloire de Dijon" and "Snake," poems which any candid and unperverted taste must applaud, poems which do indeed (and this is the strength of Kenneth Rexroth's case) make us exclaim at finding the business of poetry once again so simple, so straightforward, so direct.

To be sure, Lawrence is not a confessional poet as Lowell and Ginsberg are confessional poets. For the confessional poet comes in two sizes: there are the Wordsworthian poets who confess to virtue (like Pasternak), as well as the Byronic poets who confess to vice (like Baudelaire). Lawrence in this respect is of the Wordsworthian sort, and in fact he was very hard and contemptuous towards writers such as Rozanov who confessed to meanness and perversities. For myself, I find it easier today to sympathise with the Wordsworthians than the Baudelaireans. For our leaders of literary fashion long ago fell over backwards in their determination not to treat the Baudelaires of our day as the pundits of Paris in the 1860s treated Baudelaire. In other words, those who demand most insistently that our poetry be confessional, demand also that its confessions be Baudelairean; they are so determined that the poetic vocation be agonised and dishevelled that they are never so affronted as by the Wordsworthian or Pasternakian poetry which confesses, on the contrary, to having found the poetic vocation stabilising, composing, refreshing. Robert Bly is one contemporary poet who makes this Wordsworthian claim to have gained access through his vocation to sources of refreshment and composure; and however we might differ as to the intrinsic quality of Mr. Bly's poems, we can see that it is this pretension which has provoked some of his reviewers to fury.

But there is more than this to be said. "Byronic" is a term we may use lightly; "Wordsworthian" is not, or not in my usage. If it is true, as I am suggesting, that with those of our poets who confess to virtue we have a recovery of the note of Wordsworth, we need to understand just what this means. What is involved is the assumption or the contention

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(with Wordsworth it was a contention) that the living of a poetic life is more important than the writing of poems; that the poems indeed have their value less in themselves than as pointing back to the life that they have come out of, which they witness to.[1] This view of poetry is horribly dangerous, especially in our age when publicity is an industry with a fearsome range of techniques for exploiting the personality, distorting it, and destroying its privacy. This view of poetry opens the door to the exhibitionists; to the deceivers and self-deceivers (the conscious and unconscious hypocrites); to the man who will plume himself on his status as a poet, and demand special privileges on the strength of it, without ever submitting to having his qualifications examined. All this is true. These are indeed the lamentable consequences of once again admitting the Romantic pretension that the poetic life is more important than any of the poems which come out of it. Nevertheless these consequences must be accepted, and even gladly accepted. At those infrequent moments when, as readers or writers, we think really earnestly about what poetry is and means, we cannot regret that the question of sincerity has once again become central. On the contrary we must welcome it; we must welcome the change from poetry seen as the extant body of achieved poems, to poetry seen as a way of behaving, a habit of feeling deeply and truly and responsibly. If poetry is once again making Wordsworthian pretensions, we must be glad of this, whatever the untidy, embarrassing, and disconcerting consequences.

In the first place, we must be glad to be compelled to recognise that we are all, like it or not, post-Romantic people; that the historical developments which we label "Romanticism" were not a series of aberrations which we can and should disown, but rather a sort of landslide which permanently transformed the mental landscape which in the 20th century we inhabit, however reluctantly. It seems to me now that this was a recognition which I came to absurdly late in life; that my teachers when I was young encouraged me to think that I could expunge Romanticism from my historical past by a mere act of will or stroke of the pen, and that by doing this I could climb back into the lost garden of the 17th century. It is not a question of what we want or like; it is what we are stuck with—post-Romantic is what we are.

BUT THERE IS A MORE urgent reason why we should welcome "sincerity" back into our vocabulary, and it is for this reason that I have coupled (I think justly) the name of Pasternak with that of Wordsworth. For who of us can doubt, examining the spectacle of Pasternak, that here is a case in which the witness of a poet's life lived through matters more than any of the poems which that poet wrote—poems which most of us can't judge in any case, for lack of adequate translations? It was poets, at all events writers, who brought the Hungarians into the streets of Budapest in 1956, as it was a poet, Petöfi, who in 1848 incited the Hungarians into revolt against the Austrian Empire. This is what it means to be a poet, or what it *can* mean, in societies less fortunate than ours. What these extreme situations put to the test is not a poem but a poet; or (more precisely) it is poetry embodied in persons who have dedicated themselves to a life of sincere feelings, not poetry embodied in poems which resist all the guns of the critical seminar. Isn't this indeed what Pasternak spells out for us in his *Doctor Zhivago*, that narrative of a poetic life, which, simply by being lived through, challenges and criticises and condemns the society about it?

To be sure, it is easier to applaud in this way the Wordsworthian poetry which witnesses to virtue, than the Byronic or Baudelairean poetry which confesses to vice. The name of Baudelaire is there to show (and in some measure the name of Allen Ginsberg shows it also) that the latter sort of poetry can challenge and condemn the society it is written from. But over this Byronic sort of poetry there necessarily falls the shadow of a divided purpose: the poet confesses to discreditable sentiments or behaviour, but in doing so he demands credit for having the courage or the honesty of his shamelessness. By contrast the Wordsworthian poet is asking for credit quite unequivocally. He may be deceiving himself, he may not have earned the credit which he asks for, and we may withhold it. But at least he knows, and we know, what he is up to; he is not wooing us, coquetting with us, glancing at us sidelong.

IF THE QUESTION, "Is he sincere?" is reinstated as a legitimate question to be asked of a poet, what is the consequence of this for those of us who read and write poetry specifically *in the universities*? The most revolutionary consequence is one that is really counter-revolutionary: the biographer, who a generation ago was excluded from literary criticism, or at least demoted, must now be re-installed as a highly

[1] It may be indeed that "poetry of witness" would be a better name for what I have called "confessional poetry." "Witness," for instance, fits Dr. Williams' poems better than "confession." And "witness," as we hear it used from the pulpit ("a Christian witness"), explains better than "confession" why such poetry is often "prophetic" into the bargain.

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respectable figure. In itself this does not matter much; for in fact we have all continued drawing on the biographies of dead poets, though it's been important for some of us to pretend that we weren't doing so. In the case of our living contemporaries, however, the case is different; for until the biography of a poet is written, his place has to be taken by the retailer of gossip. Or so it may seem. In fact, however, in the case of a living contemporary poet, we rely not on biography but autobiography; the confessional poet is his own biographer, and his poems are his autobiography. Like any other autobiographer, he selects what he will reveal and suppresses much more; and in so far as the confessional poet thus presents only a trimmed and slanted image of himself, he may still be thought to be revealing to us not a personality but a *persona*. This is to use the term "persona" in an extended but thoroughly legitimate sense. Yet it seems to me unhelpful, and even a sort of evasion. The poets we are speaking of are trying to break out of the world of rhetoric; and although we can spread the nets of rhetoric wide enough to catch them despite their struggles, in doing so we are being ungenerous and we are even being dishonest, because we are refusing to acknowledge what is so patently the impetus behind their writing. Moreover, as critics we need to ask ourselves why we should so much want to do this. Why is it so important to us as critics to seal off the world of literature from the adjacent worlds of biography and history and geography? What are we afraid of?

IN ANY EVENT, however, we are not required to dismantle the whole body of our current assumptions. In part at least, the measure of a poet's sincerity is, it must be, *inside his poem*. This is to say that confessional or prophetic pretensions in the poet do not absolve him from producing poems that are well written. This seems too obvious to be worth saying. But, alas! among the hoary fallacies which the new confessional poetry has brought to life among us is the notion that we know sincerity by its dishevelment; that to be elegant is to be insincere. To be sure, we must beware of supposing that the marks of good writing are few and obvious. Confessional poetry, when it is good, is characteristically limpid, thinly textured semantically. And so, for instance, ambiguity, a high incidence of words with double meanings—this, which we have thought of as a feature of all good writing, we must now recognise as a feature of only *one kind* of good writing. For rather different reasons, irony and paradox are features which we must learn to set less store by. We must learn, I dare say, to give more weight to other features, notably to the *tone*

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in which the poet addresses us, and to the fall and pause and run of spoken American or spoken English as the poet plays it off against his stanza-breaks and line-division. In short, a poet can control his poem in many more ways, or his control of it manifests itself in more ways, than until lately we were aware of. Nevertheless we were right all along to think that a poem is valuable according as the poet has control of it; now we must learn to call that control "sincerity." For, after all, what is the alternative? Are we to collect gossip about his private life? Are we to believe the poet sincere *because he tells us so*? Or because he shouts at us? Or (worst of all) because he writes a dishevelled poetry, because the poem and the experience behind the poem are so manifestly *out* of his control?

To be sure, "control" is a word that may easily be misunderstood. Yet I think we need it in order to acknowledge how much of the poetic activity in the act of composition can be summed up in words like "judgment" and "prudence." For I should maintain, in the teeth of Kenneth Rexroth that, as for *prophetic* poetry (which may be, but need not be, confessional poetry also), it is necessarily an inferior poetry. My reasons I have given already. The prophet is above being fair-minded—judiciousness he leaves to someone else. But the poet will absolve himself from none of the responsibilities of being human, he will leave none of those responsibilities to "someone else"; and being human involves the responsibility of being judicious and fair-minded. In this way the poet supports the intellectual venture of humankind, taking his place along with (though *above*, yet also along with) the scholar and the statesman and the learned divine. His poetry supports and nourishes and helps to shape *culture*; the prophet, however, is outside culture and, really, at war with it. He exists on sufferance; he is on society's expense-account, part of what society can sometimes afford. Not so the poet; he is what society cannot dispense with.

Henry Luce's Life & Time

Story of a Somebody — By T. S. Matthews

This[1] is not a good book, although in its uffish way it tries hard. The subject it attempts is of some interest to American and perhaps even to British readers: the sad story of a great success.

Henry Luce, who died last year, leaving a publishing empire worth (on paper) nearly $690 million, was the biggest American press tycoon of his generation. If he had been British he would probably have been offered a peerage for making so much money in a line of business that is supposed to be as stout a bulwark of democracy as beer is. As it was, he had to content himself with the drabber honours the U.S. bestows on its worthy citizens—and an income that no British press lord would be allowed to keep.

Luce was as earnest a patriot as his friend Lord Beaverbrook, and had as little luck in politics; or even less, for Beaverbrook had the fun of running a war-time Ministry and the more lasting fun of poking an irresponsible finger in any government pies that roused his appetite. With few exceptions, Luce did not consciously use his publications as instruments of political propaganda. The great exception was his stubborn support of Chiang Kai-shek, a crusade that flumped as flat as all of Beaverbrook's; and until God sent him Eisenhower, Luce invariably backed the losing candidate in presidential elections. He himself would have dearly loved to be a Senator, and he might have been a good one; but he sensibly decided that his position as a journalist in effect disqualified him from holding public office unless he was prepared to give up journalism, which he wasn't.

Luce came from a long line of New Englanders, but was born in China, where his father was a Presbyterian missionary. Except for a

[1] *Luce: His Time, Life and Fortune.* By John Kobler. London, Macdonald, 42s.; New York, Doubleday, $4.95.

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brief visit to America when he was eight, he was a stranger to his native land until the age of 15. His education, at Hotchkiss School and Yale, was made possible by a lady bountiful. At Hotchkiss he met a tough-talking, brilliant boy named Briton Hadden, and the two of them struck up a competitive alliance that lasted through school and college, resulted in the joint venture of *Time, the Weekly Newsmagazine*, and endured till Hadden's early death in 1929.

At that point, six years after *Time*'s beginning, when the little magazine had struggled up to a circulation of 225,000 and was starting to make money, the partnership of Luce and Hadden was showing signs of strain. Hadden was not in favour of Luce's new venture, a magazine about American business to be called *Fortune*, lavishly produced and priced at the unheard-of figure of $1 a copy; but Hadden died, *Fortune* duly appeared (just in time for the Depression), and with *Time*'s help battled on to eventual success. From then on it was all Luce's own work.

The next leap forward was *Life*—whose instant success nearly finished him. He had so cautiously underestimated *Life*'s circulation that for some time its advertising rates didn't begin to cover the costs of production. Until the advertising contracts could be built up abreast of the circulation figures, *Time* had to plug the dyke. But as soon as *Life* had its head above water Time Inc. grew, in Luce's words, from a big little business to a little big business. He had it made; and once you have it made the story gets to be a bit of a bore, at least for other people.

THE CORPORATION HE BEGAT lived happily ever after—or was, in the last market report I saw. Few human stories, however, have a happy ending: Luce's came in a heart attack a few years after he had retired—well, tried to retire. By that time, no doubt, he had begun to share in those "gifts reserved for age . . .", the "bitter tastelessness of shadow fruit," perhaps even

The rending pain of re-enactment
Of all that you have done, and been; the shame
Of motives late revealed, and the awareness
Of things ill done and done to others' harm
Which once you took for exercise of virtue.
Then fools' approval stings, and honour stains.

Such speculations are not to be found in Mr. Kobler's book, which attempts to discover Luce in the facts of his working life (what did he ever do but work?) and to follow his wilful path through the mazy ascending spirals of his business success. To get his facts Mr. Kobler interviewed a good many people (of whom I was one), read a number of books and magazine articles, and even had "many talks" with

3

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Luce himself. Moreover, he manfully admits that he once worked briefly on *Time*.

Mr. Kobler says (and he sometimes writes better than this): "According to a common complaint of people with specialised knowledge, they seldom read a story [in *Time*] in their field that can meet rigorous standards of accuracy."

This "common complaint" has frequently been made, with more or less justice, against many other newspapers and magazines in both Britain and America; it is really a criticism of journalism itself, and it also applies to Mr. Kobler's journalistic book, which, starting with the dust jacket, is full of careless mistakes. Even in his list of acknowledgments he gets a couple of names wrong. He constantly presents little facts a little twisted or misses the minor point.

On p. 7 he misquotes Luce. On p. 138 he has telescoped two different stories into one, thus making hash of both. On p. 152 he misquotes Hadden. On p. 179 he misquotes a passage from a book of mine; on the next page, trying to retail a story I told him, he gets the facts mixed up. Ditto on the following page. On p. 188 he undervalues the top salary of a *Time* senior editor by $5,000. On p. 194 he says that Luce's highest praise was to note on a piece of copy, *"Very well done."* Not so: Luce's much warmer word was *"Excellent!"*—sometimes with more than one exclamation point. I never heard that "Napoleon's soldiers were said to sleep with a marshal's baton under their pillows" (p. 195) but to march with one in their knapsacks.

The reason Luce wrote out all his letters and memos in pencil was not because "he required a pencil to slow down his thought process" (p. 217) but simply because he never learned to dictate. And far from writing a "scrawl," unlike most Americans he wrote an extraordinarily well-formed hand, since he learned his letters at an English school in China. On p. 248 Mr. Kobler again muffs a story I told him about Luce feeding the polar bears at the zoo in Rome. On p. 263 he so foreshortens the account of *Time*'s abortive highbrow magazine, "Project X," that in effect he doesn't tell it at all. He raises an eyebrow at Luce's pronouncing Father Ricci as "Ritchie" (p. 284).

These are all minor matters, I agree, and perhaps do not detract much from Mr. Kobler's implicit assumptions, which he never states directly himself: that Luce was a sinister influence, and that *Time* was his cloak and dagger. His most effective witnesses are Edmund Wilson (*Time*'s report of the world is "caricature without a purpose") and Harold Ross, late great editor of the *New Yorker*. When in 1936 Wolcott Gibbs wrote his famous parody of *Time*, Ross sent proofs of the piece to Luce, who hit the ceiling and demanded all kinds of changes. There was a stormy meeting between the two editors and their staff officers, and shortly before the article went to press Ross wrote Luce a long letter, much of which appears in this book. Ross wrote:

> I was astonished to realise the other night that you are apparently unconscious of the notorious reputation *Time* and *Fortune* have for crassness in description, for cruelty and scandal-mongering and insult. I say, frankly, but really in a not unfriendly spirit, that you are in a hell of a position to ask anything....

Ross also quoted a note from Gibbs:

> I think *Time* has gratuitously invaded the privacy of a great many people; I think it draws conclusions unwarranted by the facts, distorts quotes, reprints rumours it knows have little foundation, uses a selective editing in getting together a story from the newspapers that throws it altogether out of focus, and that *Time*'s style is an offence to the ear....

Strong words! And I think Gibbs, at least, overplayed his hand. Journalism by its very nature tends to invade privacy ("Journalism *is* bad taste" was one of Luce's definitions); conclusions should sometimes be drawn, and whether or not they are unwarranted is a matter of judgment and opinion; anyone who is quoted is apt to think the quotation is "out of context" and therefore "distorted"; very few editors, on *Time* or elsewhere, unless they are servants of a government-controlled press, would deliberately spread lies (and ask Claud Cockburn about rumours!); the implication that *Time* depended entirely or mainly on the newspapers as the source and authority for its news was false, even 32 years ago. As for *Time*'s style—well, he can have that one; but that was in another country, and besides....

We don't have to take *Time* quite as seriously as it takes itself. *Time* takes itself with the utmost seriousness, and for the most cogent of all American reasons: it makes big money. Let us not forget, however, what it actually is: a little news-magazine whose face is its fortune and whose life depends on its making entertaining faces. *Time* has the same sort of importance the Hearst press used to have; it has never been important in the way *The New York Times* is.

In spite of *Time*'s pretensions, in spite of its bias and occasional crudity and distortions of the human scene, it often fills in some small gaps in the gossip which is the main attraction of the press, and generally *Time* gives more

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gleanings for the curious than the newspapers do; it is diverting, and aims to be. When you're away and can't get your favourite daily paper, *Time* gives you a handy if unconsciously horrifying letter from home; and for that kind of mildly pernicious pastime it's well worth the price of a pack of cigarettes.

MR. KOBLER'S little book—and it *is* a little book, though it whistles up some questions I cannot answer—tries to tell the story of a man who turned into a corporation, a harder job than telling the story of a lady who became a fox. Like *Time*'s "cover stories" it falls between two stools, ending up in an unsatisfactory position. I suppose it might be done, but the subject is far too elusive for Mr. Kobler. I knew Henry Luce, and thought at times that I knew him fairly well; but I should not like to try writing his life.

Suspicious, devious, cold, rude, crude, sensitive, flinty, generous, exciting, boring, enthusiastic, exhausting, inspiring, appreciative, shrewd, quick, prejudiced, shy, complex, simple, brilliant, ambitious, remorseful—these are some of the adjectives that might with justice be applied (and have been) to Henry Luce. They don't add up to "the kind of exciting sense" into which he was always trying to force the square peg of his life.

Nobody as yet has tried to sort out these contradictory adjectives that fail to describe him, although all of them fit, or to distil them into the two or three verbs that might fit him better. Certainly Mr. Kobler has not attempted any such interpretation: his portrait of Luce is as much of a caricature as Edmund Wilson found *Time*'s travesties of the human beings it puppeted. Perhaps a true portrait of Henry Luce would have to be a labour of love, like Thurber's *Years with Ross*.

Luce was not, I should say, what you would call a likable man; but there was, believe it or not, something lovable about him. A good many people disliked him, and he acquired more enemies than most men do (as Cecil King, I believe, has remarked, the practice of journalism is not exactly a minuet). One of them, whom Luce hated in return, and not without good cause, was President Franklin Roosevelt. Roosevelt not only spiked his appointment to an embassy but, apparently out of vindictive spite, personally prevented him from visiting any theatre of war.

Mr. Kobler quotes Luce as saying, years after Roosevelt died, "I sometimes pray, 'Forgive me my sins as I forgive that son of a bitch his.'" I never heard him say that, but it has the authentic Lucean ring.

J. R. Ackerley

My Father and Myself

When Mr Ackerley's father died in 1929, he left his son a note confessing that he had for many years been the father and provider to two households. This disturbing news led to some soul-searching on Joe Ackerley's behalf, the result of which is this remarkably unconventional autobiography, which the author wished to be published only after his death. Illustrated 30s

Alexander Solzhenitsyn

'The one great living writer of the USSR'

Tibor Szamuely, SPECTATOR

Cancer Ward

Translated from the Russian by Nicholas Bethell and David Burg

The publication in 1962 of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovitch* made the name of Alexander Solzhenitsyn world-famous. The author himself considers *Cancer Ward* his most important novel. It portrays the relationships of a group of people in the cancer ward of a provincial Soviet hospital, a remarkable cross-section of contemporary Russian characters and attitudes. 30s

BODLEY HEAD

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Ideology and Mr. Lichtheim

By Maurice Cranston

THE FIRST and most substantial essay in George Lichtheim's collection[1] is the one which gives the book its title. Some of the others are book reviews which do not stand up to a second reading. In "The Concept of Ideology" we have Mr. Lichtheim at his best, but it is an essay which also suggests what is amiss with Mr. Lichtheim when he is not at his best. After a few pages, the essay changes its nature; it begins as *Ideengeschichte*, as history of ideas, and then turns into something else, as we shall see.

In common with most writers on this subject, and notably Professor Arne Naess (to whom he makes no reference), Mr. Lichtheim notes that the word "ideology" first made its appearance in French as *"idéologie"* at the time of the great Revolution. The word was introduced by Destutt de Tracy as a short name for his science of ideas, that empirical practical philosophy he had adopted from Locke and Condillac. Destutt de Tracy and his friends, thereafter known as the *idéologues*, believed in the establishment of a new rational and scientific society largely by means of education. Their theory, which paradoxically combined liberalism with planning, was for a short time under the Directory the official social doctrine of the Republic. Destutt de Tracy had intended the word *"idéologie"* to be a technical name, dry and emotively neutral, but he, and those who shared his beliefs, had such a strong attachment to their science of ideas, thinking it might save the nation, if not the whole of mankind, that the word *"idéologie"* soon became an eulogism, a "hurrah-word."

Then Napoleon produced a new twist. He was at first a supporter of the science of ideas. Later he turned against it and its exponents; and in Napoleon's mouth the words *"idéologie"* and *"idéologue"* became "boo-words" or dyslogisms. Mr. Lichtheim writes, very aptly:

> The story of Bonaparte's degeneration can be written in terms of his relations with the *"idéologues"*: down to the day in December, 1812, when, returned to Paris from the disaster in Russia, he blamed them, in an address to the Conseil d'État, for the catastrophe into which his own despotism had plunged the country.

Napoleon's objections to the *idéologues* were not, however, entirely bogus. He saw them more and more clearly as inexperienced intellectuals, bookish men, instructed only by theory, meddling in practical matters which they did not understand. Considered in this light, the *idéologues* appeared to others besides Napoleon as false prophets: and the word *"idéologie"* as a dyslogism caught on.

Since that time the word has retained a fairly coherent core of descriptive meaning, whether steady or shifting, and an emotive quality which varies with the preferences of the speaker and the hearer; for some "ideology" is still a eulogism, for some a dyslogism; and perhaps for some (fewer, one suspects) an emotively neutral term. There is one exception to this generalisation. It is a peculiarity of Marxism that "ideology" figures in its language both as a eulogism and a dyslogism. In the mouth of Marx himself, "ideology" is at first a pejorative word, and then acquires a second meaning; later, with the development of Marxism, "ideology" has become an unambiguous "hurrah-word," so that no modern Communist state is complete without its Ideological Institute.

One might have inferred from the title of Mr. Lichtheim's essay and from what he says about his intentions, that he would be concerned with analysing the core of descriptive meaning that word "ideology" possesses. He writes:

> Few concepts play a larger part in present-day discussions of historical and political topics than does that of ideology, and yet it is not always clear what meaning is applied to the term by those who employ it... it is here intended to clarify the theme by explaining the different significations attached to the term "ideology" and the shifting status of the phenomenon itself.

This interesting programme Mr. Lichtheim simply does not carry out. He concentrates his attention on the paradoxical transformation of the concept of ideology in Marxist and post-Marxist thought. Thus we receive from his

[1] *The Concept of Ideology and Other Essays.* By GEORGE LICHTHEIM. Random House, New York, $5.95.

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essay only a fragment of the history of the concept of ideology, and a fragment which will seem important to the reader only to the extent that Marxism and its derivations seem important. It might indeed, perhaps, be more appropriate to consider this essay not as history at all, but as a work of exegesis, or as an attempt on the part of a sophisticated and unorthodox Marxist to defend the rationality of his "ism" against liberal and other suspicions that Marxism's contradictory attitude to ideology is evidence only of Marxism's intellectual feebleness.

His defence is, in a way, impressive. And not surprisingly, for since Hegel has taken the place of Stalin as the modern Marxist's favourite philosopher next to Marx, a formidable array of dialectical weapons has been at the disposal of any champion of Marxism. Mr. Lichtheim is a scholar who knows how to use those weapons.

His argument is that Marx first took over from Hegel the notion that ideology is "false consciousness." The problem had arisen for Hegel because in his view people are "instruments of history, executors of a process whose meaning is concealed from them and which becomes self-conscious only *post festum* in the philosopher who sums up the sense of the epoch." For Hegel the task of philosophy was to interpret reality and reconcile the world to itself. This appeared to his radical critics as the "ideology" of the *status quo*. "From here," writes Mr. Lichtheim,

> it was only a step to the notion that speculative philosophy as such barred the way to that reconstruction of the world which was required to realise the aims of philosophy, liberty and rationality. This step was taken by Marx, with the help of Feuerbach who had taught him to regard speculative thinking as the ultimate barrier to the understanding of man's role in the world.

Thus "ideology" for Marx meant, in the first place, false consciousness. Only, whereas for Hegel the reality of the historical process was alienated mind coming to terms with itself, for Marx it was alienated human labour reflecting itself in an ideological cloud-cuckoo land. But in Marx's own writing, the word "ideology" did not remain unambiguous. Mr. Lichtheim shows how it came to mean not only the "false consciousness" of men *unaware* of their real role, but also the self-consciousness of an epoch, which might well be *true*. Mr. Lichtheim writes:

> What a culture thinks about itself may be "ideological" in one sense without being so in

Action

SIR MALCOLM KNOX

This study of moral experience is based on Gifford Lectures delivered in Aberdeen. Special consideration is given to the nature of action as such and the book ends with an examination of the relation between morality and religion. The wide range of the author's argument and his numerous concrete examples present a challenge to the contemporary linguistic philosophy which he rejects.
Muirhead Library of Philosophy 45s.

New Shapes of Reality

MARTIN JORDAN

A. N. Whitehead was a major philosopher of great originality. His work touches all our preoccupations, from the nature of society to the destiny of man. Now there are signs of a Whitehead revival. The author, who has been fascinated by Whitehead for a quarter of a century, has written this book to encourage the trend. There are plenty of serious books designed to introduce Whitehead. This book tries to be more popular than these and will appeal to a larger audience. 35s.

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the other: thus, for example, if the Middle Ages developed thought-forms which "reflected" the feudal-hierarchical structure of society, the official ideology might nonetheless serve as an accurate guide to that particular reality, just because it was mirrored in the categories.

Mr. Lichtheim mentions Max Weber as another writer who gave the word "ideology" the same two meanings as Marx himself; although the reader will probably be disappointed by the small amount of attention Mr. Lichtheim devotes to Weber. Indeed, Weber appears in this essay chiefly as a kind of go-between after Marx and before Karl Mannheim (an inferior thinker, if there ever was one, but at any rate the author of a book with the word "ideology" in its title: *Ideology and Utopia*). Now Max Weber can readily be seen as standing Marx on his head by arguing that intellectual movements (such as Protestantism) prompt economic changes (such as the rise of capitalism); and Mannheim then appears to restore the Marxist *status quo* by arguing that all intellectual development springs from social circumstances (the "sociology of knowledge" syndrome). But these *désaccords* of sociologists really do not tell us much about the meaning of the word "ideology" in English usage, or of *"idéologie"* in French, or *"Ideologie"* in German. So we must next give some consideration to the matters Mr. Lichtheim has neglected.

What *is* an ideology? The concept has, I think, five characteristics which give it a distinctive core of meaning:

1. An ideology contains an explanatory theory of a more or less comprehensive nature about human experience.

2. It contains a programme, presented in generalised and abstract terms, of political and social change.

3. It conceives the realisation of this programme as entailing a struggle.

4. It seeks not merely to persuade, but to recruit loyal and zealous adhesion, currently called "commitment."

5. It addresses a wide, or mass, public, but may confer on "intellectuals" some special role of leadership.

In the light of this analysis, one can see how the word "ideology" can equally be applied to things as different as Destutt de Tracy's science of ideas, Auguste Comte's positivism, Marxism, African socialism, fascism, and to certain forms of nationalism. It is clear also ideology has some points of resemblance with religion: indeed, they are often spoken of as if they belonged to the same logical category. But the differences are surely more important than the resemblances. A religion is a system of faith, worship, and conduct. If it could be said, like an ideology, to have an explanatory doctrine, such explanations are always in terms of a divine order; and are never, like the doctrines of ideology, centred on this world alone. A religion certainly does not have to have a programme of political and social action, although it may have a vision of just and decent social order. The emphasis of religion is on inwardness, and the redemption of each individual's human soul, while an ideology speaks to the mass man, to the class or group or nation or crowd. Religion recognises its debt to faith and revelation; whereas ideology believes, however mistakenly, that it lives by reason alone.

Both, it may be said, demand "commitment," but if we think of the great days of medieval Christendom, one may doubt if "commitment" was then a marked feature of religion. The church was part of everyone's environment and culture in Europe. Baptism took place in infancy; no one ever joined the church; people imbibed the Christian religion with their mother's milk. Here, of course, we are speaking of a past world. At the beginning of the modern world religion began to take on a different form. Christianity entered what might well be called its ideological phase.

IDEOLOGIES IN THE FULL SENSE of the word are only as old as the word "ideology"; that is, only as old as the French Revolution. The 19th century and after has aptly been called "the age of ideology." But before that period something happened which prepared the way for the emergence of full-fledged ideologies; and what happened was that Christianity, without becoming an ideology, began to develop "ideological" tendencies.

Savonarola's Christianity in *quatrocento* Italy had distinctly ideological features: the stress on a political programme, the militant spirit, the appeal to the multitude, the attempt to establish a puritan utopia in the City of Florence. Calvinism in Geneva had similar characteristics. So had various forms of protestant sectarianism in the English-speaking world. And certain types of militant counter-Reformation Catholicism became similarly ideological. The kind of contentious thought and talk that worried Thomas Hobbes so much in the early 17th century may also be seen as part of this emergence of the ideological type of politics. It is a type of politics that can be clearly distinguished from both the traditional and empirical types. In traditional politics, which was once the most usual, political decisions were reached by established authorities in the light of precedent. In empirical politics, which includes the democratic politics of the modern world, decisions are

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reached by a kind of dialogue or interplay of opinion and demand; politics is recognised as belonging to the domain of the practical. Politicians are expected to know the real world of experience, and know how to perform their public duties. The ideological type of politics is very different. Here there is no slow apprenticeship to practice, but, as Napoleon said, apropos of the first *idéologues*, the sudden materialisation of someone armed only with theory. Someone who has thought out everything in his head, and has general answers to particular problems. Someone who enters politics not to observe and listen, but only to preach. Historically speaking, this prophetic posture seems to be the link between religion and ideology. And there may be a good deal in the suggestion that the ideology in the contemporary world serves as a secular substitute for a religion which has been lost.

So much for ideology and religion. What of ideology and philosophy? Now the word "philosophy" is used in more than one sense. First, there is the academic sense of "philosophy": as the systematic study of logic, metaphysics, ethics, etc., in the manner of Plato, Spinoza, Kant, and the rest. But there is also "philosophy" in the more popular sense of *Weltanschauung*, or an ordered and reflective view of life and morals. Ideology has not often been confused with the more purely academic kind of philosophy, but it is often treated as if it was the same thing as *Weltanschauung*. Indeed it is one of the more impudent claims of modern ideologists to assert that a man without an ideology is a man without a *Weltanschauung*, an uncommitted, irresponsible, and morally inferior man.

To have a *Weltanschauung* is to have a reflective view of life which distinguishes a man, to some extent, from men who live and act unreflectively, although one would not deny that unreflective men may nevertheless lead excellent and even noble lives. A man with a *Weltanschauung* is someone who has thought out a particular view of life, and who bears witness to his belief in it by deeds as well as words. A man who professed to believe in a life of honesty and then continuously cheated and lied would not be said genuinely to believe in that way of life. Conduct as well as talk is entailed in having a *Weltanschauung*. This is the connection between *Weltanschauung* and commitment. The connection between ideology and commitment is quite otherwise. Ideology is a "package deal." It is made up of a system and a programme, and the adherent must take the lot. Ideology does not allow people to accept one part and leave the rest. Discrimination is forbidden. Instead of that reflectiveness which is essential to a *Weltanschauung*, ideology calls for the willing submission of the mind to an external system.

While *Weltanschauung* is by nature pensive, ideology is zealous and combative. And indeed "commitment" to an ideology can almost be measured by the emotional temperature and militancy of the adherent. It is characteristic of ideology both to exalt "action" and to regard action on the analogy of military action. One has only to look carefully at the prose style of the founders of all ideologies to be struck by the military and war-like language that is habitually used. Words like "struggle," "resistance," "march," "victory," "overcome," "defeat," "advance," "capture," "banners," "tactics," "strategy," "conquest"—the literature of ideology is replete with such martial expressions. To commit yourself to an ideology is to join a fight, to enroll in a struggle. Thus, unlike the "commitment" entailed by a *Weltanschauung*, which is a matter of reflection and conduct, the "commitment" to an ideology is really a form of *enlistment*. To become the adherent of an ideology is to become a *partisan*.

The thought which suggests itself is that Mr. Lichtheim's quaint approach to the history of ideology is to be attributed to the fact that he is himself such a partisan. His disproportionate attention to Marxism and to quasi-Marxist sociology, his defensive attitude to Marxism—are these not signs that Mr. Lichtheim's attachment to his "ism" is the attachment of an ideologist to his ideology? Is he not one of those who have enlisted in the ranks; or rather, since he is certainly no regular soldier in any Party formation, is he not to be understood as an irregular or guerrilla fighter for the cause?

Elsewhere in the book there is evidence enough of this, and evidence that rather diminishes Mr. Lichtheim's authority as a literary critic. In his reviews, any kind of Marxist writer is cracked up; any kind of liberal writer (when he deigns to write of one at all) is slapped down (compare, for example, his treatment of Professor C. B. Macpherson and of Professor John Plamenatz). Again, in the section of the book entitled "Historical Logic" there is little history and less logic, but a good deal about Marx: an appraisal of Professor Ossowski's book on *class* as an attempt to "suggest a *via media* which steers clear of liberal individualism without for that reason swallowing whole the Marxist-Leninist doctrine", and next a detailed critique of Professor Wittfogel's work on oriental society as a study in "Leninism as distinct from Marxism." Later in the book come sympathetic studies of such unorthodox Marxists

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as Lukács, Sartre, and Goldmann. Even in the section entitled "Conservatives and Radicals" the name of Marx crops up no less than seventeen times; and the essays on Rosa Luxemburg and Trotsky can only be classified as hagiography. It is another mark of the ideologist that he is unable to think of anything without connecting it or relating it to his ideology; and for those who are not in the struggle with him, this going on and on can become distinctly tedious; it must be said of every ideologist, as Emerson said of "every hero," that he "becomes a bore at last."

Heroes of Our Time

The Indian Summer of Gabriel Murray. By HUGO CHARTERIS. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson*, 30s.

Enderby Outside. By ANTHONY BURGESS. *Heinemann*, 25s.

The Junkers. By PIERS PAUL READ. *Secker and Warburg*, 35s.

Cocksure. By MORDECAI RICHLER. *Weidenfeld and Nicolson*, 25s.

CAPTAIN GABRIEL MURRAY V.C. is a hero; in the time of supreme danger in 1940 he rounded a Norwegian headland in command of a destroyer, and although outgunned, torpedoed at suicidally close range a German cruiser.... "Britain of that date gave him a V.C. as promptly as a woman of fifty responds to courtship." But, alas, ever since 1945 his life has become an existence of ever-decreasing intensity; now, becalmed in middle age, Gabriel Murray lives in a remote part of north-east Scotland, much of his time spent in a nearby converted mill "at the far end of Loch Eye [where] whole weeks pass without the heron being disturbed."

In this sparse retreat, Murray recalls perhaps the images of a Buchan hero at bay, sometimes those of the helmeted, falconed airman of the early Auden. What is certain is that he sees his country with rather less enchantment than at the time of greatness:

> As far as [Murray] was concerned Britain had become a sheep's sabbat for "grimeys, middlemen and philistines"—all baaaing together that a moment of improved freedom had come when quite obviously they were slipping day by day into the clutches of a slavery and chaos which would soon make Mayhew's London seem a real cosy corner of history....

But the ospreys become the Eumenides. In the shadow of the seahawks in the Douglas pine come the grimeys, "threatening immediately more traffic and bods than he would have got in Basingstoke." Phoenix-like, Noah is born again from the self-willed loneliness; Murray begins to receive love letters from bus-tour strangers. Moreover, the Captain is outmanoeuvred by his mother on her visits, for she breaks through his armour with relentless incomprehension, a Trojan Horse of the world he has so decisively repudiated.

But Murray's doom, as we soon see with the unfolding of Mr. Charteris' narrative, lies in his invitation to the early August dinner table of Lord Clanhatton. From this moment, Mr. Charteris deploys Murray's gradual descent with a master's touch as the images of isolation, purity, the call of the blood become infused with his love for Clanhatton's wife.

Mr. Charteris has written an exemplary parable of a hero of our time, one which will long be remembered. His world, with its strange, broken insights, its revealing dissection of everyman in his most menacing, most unfamiliar guise, yields nevertheless to the characterisation of Gabriel Murray, caught irreversibly in the rat trap of his own character. The death of the hero, measured by the quality of his alienation, has become one of the staples of the literature of our time. Mr. Charteris has successfully portrayed something much more difficult to comprehend; the disintegration of an exceptional man in a society where the old truths can no longer give meaning even to those who believe most devoutly in them.

FIVE OR SIX YEARS AGO Mr. Anthony Burgess reviewed, not too favourably, a novel by Mr. Joseph Kell, *Inside Mr. Enderby*. Reviewer and author were, it transpired, of the same substance and thus, as the publishers now formally tell us, Joseph Kell before his death bequeathed to Mr. Burgess not only his copyrights and royalties, but his identity. Moreover, Joseph Kell's dying wish was that Mr. Burgess should continue with the story half-told in *Inside Mr. Enderby*, and let it be said at once that Mr. Burgess' new novel is a minor, complex masterpiece which fittingly carries on the Enderby story. Readers of the earlier instalment will remember that the hero's muse could best be expressed by sitting on the lavatory seat until Enderby's personality underwent a sea-change

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following his cure (or remoulding) by that all-purpose psychiatrist, Dr. Wapenshaw. In short, Enderby ceased to become a poet and instead became a solid citizen, taking his mother's name of Hogg. But the muse, alas, had fled.

Enderby Outside opens at this point with Hogg, a barman in the Wessex Saddleback bar of London's latest international hotel, the Tyburn Towers, being insulted by a group of revolting television people. There seems no way out. But miraculously, another disastrous exchange in the consulting rooms of Dr. Wapenshaw results traumatically in Enderby quivering on the seat of a lavatory in Paddington station; his muse has begun a fitful return. The stylish farce of the problem of Enderby-Hogg's identity reminds us of the preoccupations of Mr. Burgess' spy-thriller, *Tremor of Intent* (1966), while the sequences devoted to the personal and linguistic properties of the inhabitants of Tangier have much of the intensity of his Malayan books of a decade ago. Moreover, the elaborate presentation of Enderby's poems, scattered throughout the text and even incorporated in an appendix, the "uncollected and early poems of F. X. Enderby," is perhaps an ironic counterpoint to Mr. Burgess' treatment of the Shakespeare canon in *Nothing Like the Sun*—is the joke of Enderby's poems on us, on Enderby, or on Mr. Burgess himself? Perhaps it's as well that we don't bother to pursue the problem too hard and just enjoy this vigorous demolition of some only-too-recognisable literary totems. I have seen Mr. Burgess' literary talents, the sheer invention, the comprehension of language fused with the understanding of inner compulsion and outer necessity, compared with those of Nabokov. Perhaps. Rather, I feel, there is a Joycean felicity about *Enderby Outside*.

The Junkers is perhaps a more ambitious novel than either of the above volumes, and inevitably it leaves a more confused, fragmented impression as one realises towards the end of the book that the author has failed, honourably, in his task: that of attempting to give an artistic explanation of some of the Dionysian forces in the German collective psyche during the last forty years. Sensibly, Mr. Read has adopted as the framework for his novel the story of a single Pomeranian family, the Von Rummelsbergs, descendants of the Teutonic Knights "who risked their lives for God and Christianity east of the Elbe. They provided large estates for themselves, we know, and, we suppose, salvation for the Slavs. . . ."

Our inescapable awareness of Germany, of course, tells us we have by no means heard the

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last of this historic rivalry, but how to provide some sort of perspective, some detachment for developing this great theme? Mr. Read's solution is to tell the tale through the eyes of a young British diplomat, a second secretary to the political adviser in West Berlin, who first falls in love with the city and then, perhaps romantically, with Suzi von Rummelsberg, so providing a means of exploring a story whose undertones are all the more effectively caught for the restraint and the insight with which it is treated. Yet the episodes created around the story of the death camps remind us this is no ordinary family chronicle.

If the denouement of *The Junkers* with its droll unmasking of interlocking mysteries, its curious understanding of Germany with which the narrator is completely involved, is unsatisfactory, that is to be expected, considering the complexity of the theme. But Mr. Read's youth —he is under thirty—gives him a perspective and an insight on these matters which one will remember.

Mr. Richler's fantasy, *Cocksure*, must be one of the most mordantly funny novels of the decade. His hero, publisher Mortimer Griffin, is a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant, a Canadian who lives in London, apparently secure, but in reality prey to secret doubts about his progressive outlook. Tormented at being thought a really right-wing reactionary racialist, Griffin is also persecuted by an obsessional editor who is convinced that he is concealing a non-existent Jewish ancestry. Other targets for Mr. Richler's breakneck-speed satire include forward-looking educational programmes, Kafka, with-it BBC-TV shows, Polly Morgan, a chimera of the *avant-garde* cinema who vanishes when life itself intrudes into the big close-up, Hampstead, and Lord Woodcock, a *bien-pensant* peer who organised food parcels for the Germans persecuted by the allies in 1945. (The vision of Mr. Richler scrutinising Mr. Read's novel is necessarily a disquieting one.)

Held together (above all) by its author's detachment, but also by his verbal pyrotechnics and splendidly outrageous dialogue, *Cocksure* is true satire in that it holds up for mockery a pervasive and accepted world-view. Clinching the narrative is the revelation that the secret of Mortimer Griffin's torment is his V.C., which is kept locked away in a hidden strongbox. Few novelists, I imagine, have gifts more disparate than Mr. Charteris and Mr. Richler. Yet in their completely different ways, the insight of their sympathy lies with the hero. Is this a literary portent?

David Rees

The Age of Gandhi

GIVEN the extended life-span which he had half-seriously declared he might attain, what would Gandhi have been ready to contribute to the world's commemoration of his hundredth birthday which, on the summons of UNESCO, is to start in October 1968 and continue for a whole year to the culminating anniversary falling on 2 October 1969? The mind, after a pause for boggling, turns back to the happy multitudes mobbing Mountbatten in Delhi in August 1947, to the rainbow that punctually restated the Pathetic Fallacy, and to the deserted Muslim house in Calcutta where the acclaimed architect of Indian freedom sat alone, fasting and spinning. Approached for an official message, the Mahatma had nothing to say. When it was argued that it would be a bad thing if he alone kept silent, he answered: "There is no message at all. If it is bad, let it be so."

But of course this will not do. It may be daunting to contemplate the wordage of one sort and another which is about to be added to a bibliography in which the standard Indian life of Gandhi (in English) occupies eight large volumes, while the official edition of the works (in large part the *ephemeridae* that were wont to begin with the famous pencil-stub on the backs of used envelopes) has reached the twentieth of an expected fifty-five. Yet in our present dreads and discontents twelve months seems hardly too much to give to a consideration of the relevant realities of Gandhi's life, work, and thought: and more especially if his failures—which were so much more impressive than most men's successes—can at last be approached with something of his own candour and his own buoyancy.

Gandhi's essential humility is not to be understood as self-effacement. Self-discovery in the Hindu tradition, self-improvement almost in that of Samuel Smiles, were harnessed to a lifelong and immensely active self-projection in which privacy was accepted only as the intermittent gift of his gaolers. And the character thus daily exposed is so compulsive in its attractions and its enigmas, its human dimensions and its human oddities, that we find ourselves welcoming, as it were, the chance of meeting him alone. In that last phase which so many have seen as the greatest—the barefoot old man in the blood-stained paddy-fields, the fasts to bring Calcutta and Delhi to sanity—Gandhi *was* alone in a real and heroic sense. In the first and formative stage in South Africa he *seems* alone because, as Geoffrey Ashe observes in a new biography,[1]

[1] *Gandhi: A Study in Revolution.* By GEOFFREY ASHE. Heinemann, 50s.

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we know comparatively little of those for whom and with whom he worked. Between these episodes lie the thirty years in which that quaint old phenomenon, the Expansion of England, gave its dying blessing to at least one of Seeley's lapidary dicta:

> The end of our Indian Empire is perhaps almost as much beyond calculation as the beginning of it. There is no analogy in history for either the one or the other.

Something so lacking in precedent and so fruitful in consequence is hardly to be treated as a biographical interlude. But the unwrapping of its enveloping clichés is by no means completed, and in the meantime we have probably lost interest (as Mr. Ashe suggests in his introduction) in the formidable political complexities. The drama, moreover, has an enormous and sometimes confusing cast. The crowd parts to let the principal actor lead the Salt March, or stride "half-naked up the steps of the Viceroy's palace, there to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor." But it closes in again. Gandhi is back in the wings, nursing a leper in a village-hut, arguing with Margaret Sanger over birth-control, giving a sick heifer its quietus, trying out an improved spinning-wheel or a new nature-cure, exasperatingly busy with the "side-issues" which to him were nothing of the sort. And since political independence, as such, was not his over-riding aim, failure and success must be examined in his terms, even if they are judged in ours.

Success in South Africa, for instance, provided Gandhi with an initial reputation in Indian political circles, and with the title (first bestowed by Tagore) of *Mahatma*. The latter he never used and sometimes deplored, and the former he put cheerfully at risk. It was at a deeper level that the South African experience had set him on his course; and of the direct witnesses to that period (including Gandhi himself in his *Experiments with Truth*) only the Rev. Joseph Doke was writing with no knowledge of what was to follow in India. Mr. Ashe is reasonably concerned more with the personal development of idea and belief, and the testing of techniques in this first field of struggle, than with the troublesome issues overlaid by the British-Boer involvement. Gazing with legitimate hindsight across the gulf of an *apartheid* which we have agreed to abominate, he points out that Gandhi

> had never directly challenged white racist supremacy as such. Myriads of Negroes were all around him; he liked them, he knew them to be oppressed; yet he never made them his allies, because the particular laws he was combating did not apply to them.

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Within this very limitation, however, Gandhi's outdated masterpiece of protest has a pointed claim to our attention. Its appeal to British principles of equal citizenship and racial tolerance was pressed confidently and with some success, only to come up against the first effects of the devolution of imperial authority. The carbon-copy of the contract, when recently presented by the Kenya Asians, was more than half-a-century old but embarrassingly legible. In its own context, too, Gandhi's South African success was to appear so short-lived as to be called a failure. His departure left the Asians in the Union without high-calibre leadership; and beyond this Mr. Ashe points shrewdly enough to a "persistent" but mistaken belief on Gandhi's part that what had been achieved by his great campaigns—conducted, as almost always thereafter, on a narrow front—was the effective conversion of the opposition.

THE SEEDS of conversion may take long to fructify, but Gandhi never abandoned his belief that *satyagraha*, when purely offered by the light that he perceived, could melt even inveterate tyranny. At the same time its power to change its own participants was at least as valuable, and its triumph in South Africa was that it made heroes out of improbable clay. Its application in India was to be on a much greater scale. Political programmes not yet envisaged, and always revisable, would be expected to adapt themselves to a pattern of social, national, and even (though by somewhat vague inference) international reconstruction, considered as a multiplication of the individual capacity for change. And hence the reverses which Gandhi would come to acknowledge and act upon, to the bewilderment of his colleagues and often to the apparent damage of their cause, were detected less in the strength or malice or resistance to conversion of the political "enemy" than in the failure of his own, partially converted, human following to meet the highest demands of his reforming teaching.

For such failures, since his teaching was invincibly based on Truth, Gandhi necessarily blamed himself. Sometimes it may have sounded histrionic, but in the summer of 1947 it was poignant. He embarked upon the last enormous enterprise of peace with the words "*I have laboured under an illusion; but I shall never be sorry for it.*" The order of release for his country was somehow an intrusion upon a man facing the overwhelming defeat of his vision. It was in accepting that defeat as the opportunity for one more, and imperative, experiment with human potential that Gandhi displayed his ultimate stature. It is surely against that—and the almost incredible vindication of its outcome—that we have to measure all discoverable flaws in his extraordinary character: and also, in some degree at least, those compendious and controversial ideas for which he rejected the label "Gandhism." For the root of all that he advocated in social action lay in what, under God, the individual can find and do by his own resources.

Mr. Ashe does not really rise to this final challenge. There is thus a loss of climax in a biography which is otherwise stimulating and freshly written; and which has managed to add to the mass of recorded evidence the results of some intriguing research into the influences of Gandhi's English contacts, human and literary. If Mr. Ashe's book turns out to be rather the portrait of an irrepressible character than the study in revolution promised on the title-page, it is because that other search-area, the political labyrinth of "the Indian Problem" seems to have found him faltering: as well it might, since even to win to its centre, after all, is to meet history's enthroned enigma. There sits the goddess of paradox, at once awful and benign, to receive from revolutionary struggle the fruits of hard-won victory. And these, says the inscription, are "the consummation and fulfilment of the historic tradition and democratic ideals of the British race."

THESE WORDS (from the late Dr. Prasad) are quoted in Ram Gopal's recent account of *How India Struggled for Freedom*,[2] in due conclusion of 450 pages well freighted with terrorism, repression, police atrocities, bureaucratic obstinacy, shifty statesmanship. And what Mr. Gopal chiefly illuminates is an internal struggle. The British are as shadowy as they were few on the ground, as remote in Calcutta or New Delhi as in London. Between passages of valuable detail Mr. Gopal's own brand of expendable sentence ("the rulers had the peace of mind and lot of fun and amusement") reminds us of how it must have looked from the ground. "It was all an Indian affair," he remarks at one point of Gandhi's second civil disobedience movement (1930–31):

> The *satyagrahis* were Indian, the firing and lathi-charging policemen were Indian, the men employed for torture-work were Indian, policemen punished in retaliation were Indian.

So (for that matter) were the many who suffered not sacrificially but as victims, by *hartal* or boycott or the virus of violence. But beyond that the contending political forces themselves emerge, in this treatment, as Indian in a significant sense.

[2] Frederick Muller, 32s. 6d.

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It is not that Mr. Gopal, tracing the freedom-movement from the post-Mutiny years, ignores either the British victims of bomb or pistol or the individual British champions of political advance. Nor, on the other hand, does he pay close attention to the more notorious forms of Indian divisiveness—not even to that line of Hindu-Muslim fission which Gandhi failed to close. The internal tension that concerns him is that between the advocates of constitutional progress and those of revolutionary dynamism.

The "third way" which Gandhi offered, at a point of equal frustration for the two that had been tried, had to gain acceptance, first and sometimes last, as a new political technique. But the novelty of the Gandhian *forms* of protest has been much overstated. The first half of Mr. Gopal's chronicle is rich enough in pre-Gandhian examples of the sit-down, the peaceful picket, the non-violent demonstration, the boycott of foreign articles, the burning of foreign cloth. He can trace the *swadeshi* appeal for the rescue of India's village-industries as early as the 1840s; while for telling evidence of passive resistance by a rural community one could go back beyond his period to the pre-Mutiny journals of Bishop Heber. Looked at thus, what Gandhi had to offer was brought into an environment ready to receive it. But this only becomes significant in the context of the popular following that was his determining contribution, his ticket of leadership.

"To the masses he was an angel." Mr. Gopal leaves it, more or less, at that. For his thesis requires him to fit the revolutionary Mahatma into a pattern of advance to independence by "constitutional agitation . . . in instalments spread over a number of decades." This was the line "adopted by educated Indians" and consonant with "the British approach to things political." Sure of the road, Mr. Gopal takes the bumps vigorously. I would much sooner commend the sustained pace and interest of his writing than argue about inevitable partialities. Mr. H. J. N. Horsburgh, on the other hand, confronts me at the outset with a stylistic deterrent that makes it difficult to do justice to his carefully-arranged study of *Non-Violence and Aggression*.[3] From the outset the reader must submit to the systemological tones of the lecture-room (in this case Glasgow's Department of Moral Philosophy). But it is more than that. The critical approach to Gandhi's teaching and practice of non-violence is an important enterprise. But to make the leap from the problems of the national to those of the international field one must be fully aware that it *is* a leap and that Gandhi, almost as often as he looked at it, declined to make it. And the problem of the systematic interpretation of his teaching and action is to distinguish between the basic and the mutable. Questions on the use of armed force, for instance, were faced as they arose, and as his own thinking developed. What was constant was the elimination of hatred and of fear. The faith that must sustain a new programme of action cannot simply adopt a creed from him, and Mr. Horsburgh convincingly asserts his own right to a rational Utopia in acceptance of "the Kantian dictum that 'ought' implies 'can'." But his deductions, which are seriously studied within their prearranged departments, lose some of their cogency when presented as an examination of "Gandhi's moral equivalent of war." Perhaps this is because what Gandhi provided—a moral (and therefore practical) improvement on civil violence—is not in fact what William James proposed in the famous phrase: the sublimation of the martial spirit in collective social enterprise, with "a part of the army enlisted against *Nature*." James' prescription may point towards the Peace Corps, but hardly towards the *satyagraha* of protest.

Francis Watson

[3] H. J. N. Horsburgh, *Non-Violence and Aggression: A Study of Gandhi's Moral Equivalent of War*. Oxford University Press, 35s.

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The Great Purge

By Robert Conquest

JUST THIRTY YEARS AGO, during the last days of July 1938, a notable massacre took place in the cellars of the Lubyanka. The dead included a member of the Politburo; the People's Commissar for Heavy Industry; the Secretary of the Central Executive Committee; and the Ukrainian Commissar for Education—all four of them Old Bolsheviks and members or candidate members of the Central Committee. The Armed Forces were represented by five, or possibly six, Army Commanders (among them a former Commander-in-Chief of the Red Army) and three Corps Commanders, including the commanding officers of six of the country's thirteen Military Districts; and by the two senior Admirals, successive Commanders-in-Chief of the Red Fleet. A prominent playwright completes (as far as we know at present) the tally of important victims.

This was obviously quite a killing by any standards. More significant still is the fact that, to the best of my knowledge, this is the first time it has ever been referred to in print.[1]

For this was one of those events which Stalin chose to conceal rather than to misrepresent. It is only with the help of material emerging piecemeal in the Soviet Union fairly lately that it has become possible to fill in obscure, or confirm doubtful areas of this sort and produce a reasonably coherent history of the extraordinary and frightful events of the late 1930s in Russia. And this is, moreover, a particularly appropriate time to write on the subject because the flow of information from Soviet sources has now virtually ceased.[2]

But it is also true that it is only in recent years—certainly not before Khrushchev's Secret Speech of 1956—that it has become possible to tell the truth about the period without meeting flat disbelief in some circles. For this recent information, most of it Soviet, has thoroughly confirmed the most respected of the old "defector" reports.

We can be reasonably certain, for example, that Stalin arranged the murder, in December 1934, of his colleague Sergei Kirov, which was the foundation-stone of the entire Purge. This has never, it is true, been stated flatly in the Soviet Union; but over the period 1956–1964 enough hints (to use a weak word) were dropped, sufficient details given, to confirm on point after point such defector accounts as that of the ex-NKVD officer Alexander Orlov. Similarly, it has been made clear that Stalin procured the death of Ordzhonikidze,[3] as reported by Victor Kravchenko and many others.

WE KNOW THAT the three great trials of August 1936, January 1937, and March 1938 were fakes. There again, even under Khrushchev, the truth was being extracted in slow and painful fashion, like some impacted wisdom tooth. Five of the 1938 defendants were fully rehabilitated, making nonsense of the whole close-knit "conspiracy" confessed to by all. Bukharin and Rykov, not rehabilitated, were briefly noted as at least "neither spies nor terrorists."[4] None of the 1937 accused has received any sort of rehabilitation, but one of the major crimes they were charged with (an attempt on the life of Molotov) was pronounced a frame-up.[5] None of the 1936 accused have been rehabilitated either, though of their major crime—the assassination of Kirov—it has been publicly stated that "great efforts are needed to find out who was really to blame," a remark scarcely compatible with their guilt.

We know, too, that the 1937 trial of Marshal Tukhachevsky and the generals was a fake. All the soldiers executed at this or any other time seem to have been rehabilitated—including Divisional Commander Shmidt, who was involved in the August 1936 "confessions." The Army is a powerful lobby, and overcame the sort of resistance apparent in other fields. Military memoirs and articles have given a great deal of revealing detail—as on the liquidation of wives, brothers, sisters, nephews of the executed officers, and the sending of their teen-age children to labour camps.[6] We also know that the

[1] Other secret execution weeks for prominent prisoners seem to have taken place in late February 1938, when victims included two members of the Politburo, the Head of the Komsomol, a Marshal, and the Deputy Chief of General Staff; and in early February 1940, when another Politburo member, the Commander of the Northern Fleet, and the producer Meyerhold were liquidated.

[2] See my new book, *The Great Terror* (Macmillan, 84s.).

[3] *Izvestia*, 22 November 1963. *Ordzhonikidze* by I. Dubinsky-Rukhadze (Moscow, 1963).

[4] *Stenographic Report of the All-Union Conference on Measures to Improve the Training of Scientific-Pedagogical Cadres* (Moscow, 1964) p. 298.

[5] N. M. Shvernik, *Speech to the XXII Party Congress* (1961).

[6] e.g. *Kazakhstanskaya Pravda*, 15 October 1963; Lev Nikulin in *Oktyabr* (nos. 2–5, 1963).

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estimates made abroad at the time of the total casualties in the officer corps are roughly correct —between 30 and 40 thousand: about half those serving, including particularly the experienced men (in 1940 not one of a random sample of 225 regimental commanders, or half the army, had been through the normal staff course).[7] Moreover, Stalin went on executing his leading generals even after the Nazi-Soviet War broke out. It has been made clear too (though this clarification has more lately been denounced as improper), that the military purge, and other measures of Stalin's, virtually invited the German attack. We already knew, indeed, that German intelligence in 1940 reported the Red Army as formidable in every way, apart from a fatally defective leadership, and added that in four years' time it would have recovered. Translated into Hitler's terms this meant "now or never." The experience of the new cadre of generals, which first barely staved off total defeat, and finally achieved victory, was bought with millions of lives.

IN THE EPILOGUE to *Doctor Zhivago*, when Gordon has remarked that all the "utter hell" of the war, in which he has fought in a punitive "death squad," was "nothing, it was bliss compared to the horrors of the concentration camp, and not because of material conditions, but for some other reason," Dudorov points out that even for him, who has spent the purge years in the midst of books, money and comfort at the University, the war came as

> an omen of deliverance, a purifying storm... its real horrors, its real dangers, its menace of real death, were a blessing compared with the inhuman power of the lie.

This may seem a hard saying to many. It is better, indeed, to die fighting than to die helpless, slandered and silent. But it is also true that the mere number of casualties of the Stalinist peace was greater than those of the war. In 1937 and 1938 alone, all the trains of evidence (conservatively estimated) converge on a figure of 7–8 million "political" arrests. Up to a million of these were shot, and the great majority of the others died in camp and prison. If we take the total excess deaths over the entire Stalin period, including collectivisation, it can hardly have amounted to less than 20 million, and may have been considerably higher.

Soviet sources have not given figures (though some Soviet documents provide the raw material of deduction). The term "millions" has indeed been freely employed; but the only Communist estimate I know is a Yugoslav one of 3 million killed in Russia in 1936–38—which, if we include camp deaths, is probably about right (Moša Pijade, Speech of 1 August 1951).[8]

In a more general way, Soviet sources have confirmed the earlier "defector" stories in the utmost detail. It is a Soviet writer—published abroad (but not censured for it at home)—who mentions that in the Lefortovo Prison alone executions were running at the rate of 70 a day as early as August 1937.[9] As to torture, General Gorbatov's account is as devastating as any. And on the "conveyor" form of interrogation—continuous questioning without sleep for days and days—we are told, for example, of Marshal Blyukher that "uninterrupted interrogation broke the health of this virile man" and that he was dead within three weeks of arrest.[10]

On the labour camps, Soviet writers like Solzhenitsyn and Gorbatov, Grigori Shelest and Evgenia Ginzburg, have produced stories which are, again, in the closest accord with information available for twenty or thirty years from so-called "anti-Soviet slander"—that is, non-Communist victims. This extends to the pettiest detail. General Gorbatov was in the Maidak Camp (hitherto only known from the listing of the camps arrived at in 1948 by Dallin and Nicolaevsky, largely from Polish reports). Evgenia Ginzburg was in the Elgen women's camp, also in the Far East (similarly given in 1950 by the Belgian-Swiss ex-Communist Eleanor Lipper).

RECENT SOVIET AND old defector reports on the dreadful Kolyma camp complex in the Far East give identical and deadly ration scales. They recount in precisely the same manner the reign of terror—here as elsewhere—of the common criminal *urkas* over the main body of prisoners, with official connivance. They confirm the virtual impossibility of surviving more than a year without a *"function"*—an office job. They describe in the same way conditions, and even

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[7] Konstantin Simonov in *Znamya* (May 1964).

[8] In his forthcoming *In the First Circle* Alexander Solzhenitsyn gives the camp population in 1949 as 12–15 million; and a document now circulating in Moscow, by the Soviet atomic scientist Andrei Sakharov, estimates deaths from execution and prison conditions under Stalin as "at least 10–15 million" (*The Times*, 22 July 1968). Academician Sakharov estimates the number of Party members to perish in the purge as around 1,150,000: my own estimate was about a million. Sakharov adds the interesting detail that c. 600,000 of them were actually executed.

[9] Evgenia Ginzburg, *Into the Whirlwind* (London, 1967), p. 136.

[10] V. Dushenkin, *Ot Soldata do Marshala* (Moscow, 1964), p. 223.

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particular events, on the *Dzhurma* and the other ships of the ghastly Middle Passage from Vladivostok to Magadan.

Some accounts of important political events have received similar, though less detailed confirmation. For instance, Khrushchev's version of the last attempt to block Stalin, in February 1937, accords with and supplements that given earlier by the Ukrainian defector H. Kostiuk.[11] Soviet accounts have also confirmed the extent of the purge of the Communist Party itself, the political revolution which saw less than 2% of the rank-and-file delegates to the 17th Party Congress in 1934 appear again at the 18th in 1939. In Leningrad, for example (where of the 154 delegates of 1934 only 2, and they the honorary, non-Leningrad figures Andreyev and Shkiryatov, reappeared in 1939), we learn that all of the city's representatives in the Central Committee were shot, all the local party secretaries, the leaders of the trade unions and the Komsomol, the commanders of the Baltic Fleet and the Military District, the Directors of the great factories, and so on down.[12]

Nor can we fail to note the names of those who rose to favour in this cyclic massacre. For one of them was Alexei Kosygin, who "played an active role"[13] in Party life as a member of the bureau of the city's Vyborg district (at a time when the main "activity" was the denunciation and purge of the previous secretaries and bureaux), and in 1937 filled one of the economic gaps as director of the "October" textile works. By July 1938 he headed the Transport-Industry Department of the Provincial Committee of the Party, and in October he was Chairman of the City Executive Committee. At each step his predecessor had been shot. The following year he was transferred to a post in the Soviet Government, of which he has been a member ever since.

Similarly in the Ukraine, where 1937–8 saw the removal of the whole local Politburo, the whole Council of Peoples' Commissars, all the provincial party secretaries (and all their immediate successors); where only 3 of the local Central Committee of 102 members remained after a year. There the beneficiaries included the young Leonid Brezhnev. He was raised to Deputy Mayor of Dneprodzerzhinsk in May 1937, became head of a department of the local Provincial Committee in 1938, and by the following year was a Secretary of that committee. He never looked back.

Another beginning to do well was A. P. Kirilenko (now, in 1968, a full member of the Politburo), who became a district Party Secretary in 1938, and a Secretary of the Zaporozhe Provincial Committee the following year. Few were so lucky. Between 1938 and the next Republican Party Congress in 1940 attrition remained high, if not so high. (Of the 118 elected in 1940, seventy-three were new members.) The parallel actions in Rostov-on-Don left the way open for Mikhail Suslov. And in Byelorussia K. Mazurov (in 1968 Vice Premier of the Soviet Union and member of the Politburo), rose through the political department of the much purged local railways. And so on.

This was a time, too, when specific instructions had been issued to deal with not only alleged traitors, but also those "spineless people" who did not adequately denounce and persecute them.[14] Dr. Alexander Weissberg, in his *Conspiracy of Silence*, commented years ago (of the directors of Ukrainian industry, but the point has more general application):

> A few months later their successors were arrested too. It was only the third or fourth batch who managed to keep their seats. In this way the erection of the foundry industry came into the hands of the young and inexperienced men. They had not even the normal advantages of youth in their favour, for the choosing had been a very negative one. They were men who had denounced others on innumerable occasions. They had bowed the knee whenever they had come up against higher authority. They were morally and intellectually crippled.

It would not, of course, be true to say that even now we are in total possession of all the relevant facts about the Purge. We are, rather, in the position of a historian of the Middle Ages or the Lower Empire who, after having for many years covered his subject by means of a handful of inscriptions and two or three chronicles (one of them falsified for reasons of state), finds half-a-dozen new codices, including confidential official documents. And this comparison is a just one. For example, it is still the case that two traditions (as the old historians would say) persist in the Soviet literature on the death dates of a liquidated member of the Politburo (Vlas Chubar) and of the Chief of Staff (Marshal Yegorov), both

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[11] Just as an account of the final resistance of the Ukrainian Central Committee in August 1937 given by the former North Caucasian official A. Avtorkhanov, has since received confirmation from Tito.

[12] *Essays on the History of Leningrad* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1964), Vol. IV, p. 381.

[13] Large Soviet Encyclopaedia, 2nd Edition, article *Kosygin*.

[14] Yu. P. Petrov, *Party Construction in the Soviet Army and Fleet 1918–1961* (Moscow, 1964), p. 301.

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long since rehabilitated. These are given quite precisely to the day, on dates in each case over two years apart.[15] For to write a history of the purges still requires the collation of much material, some of it intentionally misleading, some of it difficult to estimate.

The recent Soviet material gives much new detail on the political (and military) sides of the Purge. But as to the human essentials, it does little more than put beyond controversy evidence that has been available for twenty or thirty years. It was, as I said, disbelieved. There was no reasonable excuse for disbelieving it.

Two things were quite clear certainly no later than twenty years ago: first, that the Trials were faked, and second, that a vast and deadly Labour Camp system existed.

In the West, the facts were readily available. Leon Trotsky, the one accused at liberty, exposed the frame-up with incisive skill. The distinguished Commission headed by Professor John Dewey examined the whole evidence in the most meticulous fashion, and published its findings. It was not a question of political argument, properly speaking, but of facts. Yet, in spite of everything, these went unheard among large sections of well-informed people. The excuses which can be advanced are irrational, though often couched in the formulae of intensive rationalisation.

Twenty years ago the information available in the West on the extent and nature of the mass terror and in particular the Labour Camp system was, by any reasonable standard, overwhelming. Hundreds of accounts were available, and by 1948 Dallin and Nicolaevsky were able to give a fairly complete order of battle of the entire network. Witnesses who published their experiences included very remarkable men and women, skilled in observation, vivid in description, and reliable in fact.

We are lucky that Margarete Buber-Neumann, after surviving a Soviet camp in Kazakhstan and being handed over by the NKVD to the Gestapo with the other German Communists, on the bridge at Brest-Litovsk, survived Hitler's Ravensbruck as well.[16] We are lucky that Professor Swianiewicz was one of the 200 survivors of the 4,500 at Kozielsk. The survival of Russia's great critic Ivanov-Razumnik, and then of his manuscript, was an extraordinary fluke. That our witnesses include the Austrian physicist Alexander Weissberg and the historian Professor Shteppa is equally satisfactory. And such men were not only disbelieved; they were grossly slandered. But the full venom of Stalinist propaganda was reserved for Soviet defectors proper, and particularly those giving information about the whole nature of the new state, as well as merely of the prisons and camps.

There were, indeed, a number of fake versions, though in general these are fairly readily distinguishable from the authentic. Good rough criteria are whether an author is an authenticable figure, or a mere name on a book (like some writers who have had unexplained success in scholarly circles in the West); and whether the information checks against other—and particularly later—reports, and is itself consonant with the political and general atmosphere. Among the best and most accurate sources are some which, naturally enough from Stalin's point of view, were long made the subject of special campaigns of denigration and personal abuse.

One would not normally trust a defector's (or anybody else's) book when it comes to special matters personal to the writer. No doubt some, even the best, inflate their own position and denigrate personal enemies. But this is a perfectly normal and understandable bias, and does not necessarily affect general accounts of factual matters. A good deal of the smear campaign launched against Victor Kravchenko was based on his brash manner in court, but this was of course entirely irrelevant.[17] In any case, the reliability of the evidence does not depend purely on the real or alleged moral worth of the witness. Alexander Orlov, for example, conducted himself in the most brutal and tyrannical fashion when he was head of the NKVD in Spain, during the Civil War (as writers like Jesus Hernandez and Julian Gorkin have made clear). But his unfortunately named *The Secret History of Stalin's Crimes* (1954) seems to be most reliable—at least up to about the end of 1937, the time of the author's last visit to the Soviet Union. Apart from this deterioration, reflected in an increasing lack of detail and cer-

[15] To give a few examples: in the *Large Soviet Encyclopedia* (vol. 57, published in 1957) Chubar's death is given as 1939; in the *Small Soviet Encyclopedia* (vol. 10, published in 1960) it is 12 August 1941; in the *Ukrainian Soviet Encyclopedia* (vol. 16, published in 1964) it is 26 February 1939; in the notes to vol. 51 of Lenin's *Collected Works* (published in 1965) it is 1941. A biography of Chubar published in 1963 simply says that "several months" after his dismissal in 1938 "he was arrested and shot," adding "about a quarter of a century has passed since he died." The commemorative articles in February 1966 for the seventy-fifth anniversay of his birth are also evasive. *Pravda* and *Pravda Ukrainy* say nothing. But one provincial paper opts for the 1941 date.

[16] Margarete Buber-Neumann, *Under Two Dictators* (Gollancz, 1949).

[17] His obituary in *The Times* (London) of 26 January 1966 is a disgraceful example of the carrying forward of such attitudes even into the present.

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tainty, Orlov stands up extremely well to relevant tests.

Another source which has stood up well to the emergence of later evidence is the Army officer Alexander Barmine.[18] We may remark that Barmine's account of Nadezhda Stalin's suicide, which he learnt from her brother Pavel, accords in all essentials with that given to Svetlana Stalin some years later by members of the household. Svetlana's description of her affair with the film writer A. Y. Kapler has also been available in the West in similar form for the past fourteen years, from a Polish prisoner, Mr. Antoni Ekart, who met Kapler in the Kotlas camps. Her note on the fall of General Vlasik confirms that of NKVD defector Deryabin. And of course her description of Stalin's character and habits is in the closest agreement with Milovan Djilas—and again with Barmine. This sort of confirmation, it is quite clear, adds greatly to the general credibility of a book of this sort on other points as well.

Obviously, in the circumstances, a great deal of our information is more or less second- or third-hand. Sometimes it amounts to no more than the gossip circulating at fairly high levels. One can, indeed, differentiate between the accuracy of what was gathered from old friends by the French-Russian Communist, Charles Rappoport, passed by him to Boris Nicolaevsky and incorporated in the "Letter of an Old Bolshevik" (1937), and the accounts of interrogations given directly to Orlov by his colleagues, the interrogators themselves. But even the former turns out to be sound in a general way—on, for example, the extremely dubious nature of the Kirov case, and on the alignment within the Politburo—as later information, including some of the Khrushchevite revelations, makes clear.

But it is surely wrong to make too great a distinction in principle between information which becomes available in this sort of fashion and that which constitutes a "documentary" and scholarly source. The sources for a book like Professor A. H. M. Jones' splendid *The Later Roman Empire* make the most impressive array of codices. But the men who wrote the manuscripts were no more than the Orlovs and Nicolaevskys of their day. Their information—like all information—is subject, even at best, to a certain garbling. It is none the less the true material of history. As Gibbon remarks:

> The writer who aspires to the name of historian, is obliged to consult a variety of original testimonies, each of which, taken separately, is perhaps imperfect and partial. By a judicious reunion and arrangement of these dispersed materials, he endeavours to form a consistent and interesting narrative. Nothing ought to be inserted which is not proved by some of the witnesses; but their evidence must be so intimately blended together, that as it is unreasonable to expect that each of them should vouch for the whole, so it would be impossible to define the boundaries of their respective property.

But if care and judgment are required in assessing the probability of these accounts of political particulars, such is not the case with the prison and camp experiences of which we spoke earlier. For these dealt with a very limited set of actions, and mutual confirmation from a variety of sources should have been quite decisive. Dr. Weissberg remarked:

> I know that I shall be fiercely assailed by those who have made it their business to defend the system of totalitarian lies. I know that like all others who have come forward in the past I shall be ruthlessly slandered. I cannot prevent that and there is no legal means of proving that what I say is true. The GPU dismisses its victims without paper or documentary records. But History gives one weapon to truth which it denies to the lie. Lies have many versions, truth only one. Several hundred people left the Soviet Union when I did. Some of them will have lost their lives, or be in prison again, but others will probably have survived and be in freedom. I have no idea where they are now, but one day they too will come forward. What they say will agree with what I say, and that material agreement will confirm the truth of what I have said here.

Dr. Weissberg was wrong. His point was perfectly sound: the witnesses did confirm him. But he underestimated the capacity for self-deception to be found in the West; even though, against his expectation, a fair amount of documentary material did emerge.

Any recorder of these events must be tempted to compile a vast *sottisier* of misjudgments made by his compatriots and others. The scale of the deception is in accord with the scale of the atrocity. In my book I have thought it best to give no more than a few examples of the type of error made by many with high claims to clear judgment, moral enlightenment, and political knowledge. All the same the contemporary effect on world opinion was an important aspect of the whole Purge operation. Stalin had himself considered it when he ordered the Zinoviev Trial:

> He is not impressed by the argument that public opinion in Western Europe must be taken into consideration. To all such arguments he replies

[18] Alexander Barmine, *One Who Survived* (New York, 1945).

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contemptuously: "Never mind, they'll swallow it." (*The Letter of an Old Bolshevik.*)

The fact that so many did "swallow it" was certainly a factor in making the whole Purge possible. The trials, in particular, would have carried little weight unless validated by some foreign—and so "independent"—commentators. These must, at least to this slight extent, bear some of the responsibility of accomplices in these political murders, or at any rate in their repetition after the first show, the Zinoviev Trial, had been given unwarranted credence.

For between those in the West who accepted the Stalinist version of events and those who originated it, there stood a number of journalists, diplomats, lawyers and students of Russia whose direct and admitted duty was to examine the evidence in detail and pronounce on it. One of Stalin's most astonishing achievements was that although so much information was available contradicting the official picture, he was able to impose the latter upon such experts by methods which, on the face of it, seem crude and obvious, but which worked splendidly. They visited Russia on a bigger scale in the Yezhov period than ever before. They saw nothing. The night-time arrests, the torture chambers of the Lefortovo and the crowded cells of the Butyrka, the millions of prisoners cold and hungry in the great camps of the north, were all hidden from them. The only dramatic scenes were the three great public trials. And these too were strictly controlled and did not depart much from a prepared script.

For if access to Russia was extensive, it was also imperfect. The Soviet Government at this time maintained its model prison at Bolshevo, which many foreign visitors were shown. The Webbs gave it a laudatory account and it also attracted favourable comment from D. N. Pritt, Harold Laski, and many others. One friendly visitor had the opportunity of gaining a rather broader view—Jerzy Gliksman, who, as a progressive member of the Warsaw City Council before the war, visited and reported enthusiastically on Bolshevo and the new humanitarian methods of criminology. A few years later he found himself in camps more representative of Soviet penal practice.[19]

Other prisoners report occasionally passing through model blocks—known to prisoners as *"Intourist Prisons"*—which were shown to foreign sociologists and journalists. Herling, while in an ordinary cell in the Leningrad Transit Prison (which he describes as better than usual with only seventy prisoners in a cell for twenty) was taken by chance through a model wing, which was evidently that described by Lenka von Koerber in her enthusiastic book about the Soviet prison system, *Soviet Russia Fights Crime.*

Even when the existence of camps was admitted, they were described as of a most humane and reformatory nature. Mr. Pat Sloan (the British Communist chiefly concerned with cultural liaison with the USSR) wrote:

> Compared with the significance of that term in Britain, Soviet imprisonment stands out as an almost enjoyable experience. For the essence of Soviet imprisonment is isolation from the rest of the community, with the possibility to do useful work at the place of isolation, to earn a wage for this work, and to participate in running the isolation settlement or "prison" in the same way as the children participate in running their school, or the workers their factory.

And again:

> The Soviet labour camp provides a freedom for its inmates not usual in our prisons in this country.

In 1966 he was prepared to comment on the above:

> Among most writers on the USSR in the 1930s, I have least to be ashamed of, or to wish to withdraw.[20]

This contrasts a good deal with what we have been told by citizens of the Soviet-bloc countries, and even members of their Communist Parties. I imagine that anyone in the least interested in thes matters has read *One Day in the Life of of Ivan Denisovich.* Solzhenitsyn is a major writer, and his account of labour camp life is an extraordinary re-creation. It is, indeed, as a Soviet critic pointed out at the time, a description of rather a *good* day during rather a good period. I would hope that most readers would also have a look at the books of General Gorbatov and Evgenia Ginzburg. If so, they might think that little horror remained to be recounted.

But the death camps proper, in which everybody rather than most people perished, have naturally left no such record. Joszef Lengyel, a leading writer and Kossuth prize-winner in present-day Hungary, has told of his own camp experiences in *From Beginning to End* (1966); and in his short story "The White Poppies" he describes the winding-up of a true death camp. First the prisoners are shot, then special NKVD units shoot all the guards and staff;

[19] Jerzy Gliksman, *Tell the West* (1948).

[20] Pat Sloan, *Soviet Democracy* (1937), p. 111; *Russia without Illusions* (1938), p. 246; *Spectator*, 3 June 1966.

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then since the bodies cannot be buried deep in the permafrost, bulldozers pile earth on top of them, forming hillocks. A few years later, when the camp is re-opened as a prison hospital for the area, these facts are entirely unknown to all those concerned locally and hospital staff like to sit on the hillocks admiring the flowers.

The eminent British pro-Communist lawyer, Mr. D. N. Pritt, who attended the Zinoviev Trial, is especially interesting, since he says in his recent autobiography[21] that he had—and *still* has—"a Socialist belief that a Socialist state would not try people unless there was a strong case against them." He adds, "What the Soviet views are now ... I do not know."

Every journalist Pritt spoke to thought the trial fair and, he remarks, "certainly every foreign observer thought the same." This is not so, of course, but the fact that even considerable partisanship could suggest it is presumably a sign that far too many did think so. One can certainly detect in some of the journalists, in particular, a certain professional vanity—that *they* could be duped was inconceivable. Once committed, a sort of blindness came over them.

IT IS PERHAPS NATURAL that devoted Communists should in principle have accepted and propagated untruths, in the old tradition of "pious fraud." But such a consideration seems partially to apply also to many elements of the non-Communist Left. Not in such a clear-cut manner, not so fraudulently nor so piously, they yet tended to temper criticism, to put the best complexion on, or ignore, refactory events. On the whole, in the atmosphere of the late 1930s, Fascism was the enemy, and a partial logic repressed or rejected any criticism of its supposed main enemy, the USSR.[22] The Western capitals thronged (as Koestler says) with "the thousands of painters and writers and doctors and lawyers and débutantes chanting a diluted version of the Stalinist line."

Appeals in favour of the trials were made by various Western writers: Lion Feuchtwanger, Henri Barbusse, and even the sensitive Gandhi-fan, Romain Rolland. In the United States, a manifesto attacking the Dewey Commission was signed by a number of authors, poets, professors and artists—Theodore Dreiser, Corliss Lamont, and others.

On the other hand, there was much resistance among the tougher-minded Left. Edmund Wilson, reading the charges against Zinoviev and Kamenev while still in Russia, saw at once that they were spurious. In the United States, the Dewey Commission had as its lawyer John F. Finerty, who had appeared for the defence in the Mooney and Sacco-Vanzetti trials. The *Manchester Guardian* was the strongest and most effective of British critics of the trials. The Labour Party did the same, and put out Frederick Adler's forthright and accurate pamphlet on the subject. And on the extreme Left some of the most effective exposure was done by Emrys Hughes in the Scottish *Forward*. In fact some men on the Left (and not only Trotskyists and so on who had a direct partisan interest) were perfectly clear-headed about the matter, while some people opposed to the principles of Communism accepted the official versions.

For if there was good sense among many on the Left, there was also incompetence on the Right. The American millionaire, Ambassador Joseph Davies, reported (see his *Mission to Moscow*, 1942) to the Secretary of State that there was "proof ... beyond reasonable doubt to justify the verdict of guilty of treason."

The duping of ephemeral diplomats and journalists was accompanied, moreover, by extraordinary contributions from serious students. The Webbs assert flatly, for example, of the execution immediately following the Kirov assassination, that those shot were "undoubtedly guilty of an illegal entry and inexcusably bearing arms and bombs." "Undoubtedly" seems a strong word, when the sole evidence was a brief announcement to that effect in the Soviet press. (One at least, the deaf poet Vlyszko, has since been rehabilitated.)[23]

They explain the confessions as due to Russian prisoners

> behaving naturally and sensibly, as Englishmen would were they not virtually compelled by their highly artificial legal system to go through a routine which is useful to the accused only when there is some doubt as to the facts or as to the guilt or innocence of the conduct in question.

This curious view of the superiority of the Soviet legal system was shared by Professor Harold Laski who found Vyshinsky (with whom he had a long discussion),

> a man whose passion was law reform.... He was doing what an ideal Minister of Justice would do if we had such a person in Great Britain.

Sir Bernard Pares, a serious historian, and long-established expert on all things Russian, was equally duped. The later editions of Pares'

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[21] D. N. Pritt, *From Right to Left* (1965).

[22] The English language edition of the *Verbatim Report* of the Bukharin Trial was even made available on special terms to members of the Left Book Club.

[23] *Ukrainian Soviet Encyclopaedic Dictionary*, Vol. 1 (Kiev, 1966).

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A History of Russia[24] cover the period to the end of the Second World War. Dealing with the Purges, he permits himself to say:

> Nearly all admitted having conspired against the life of Stalin and others, and on this point it is not necessary to doubt them.... Radek, who spoke with consummate lucidity, gave what is probably a true picture.

Elsewhere Pares remarks that "the bulky verbatim reports were in any case impressive"—perhaps the most fatuous of all comments, and the fine fruit, as Mr. Walter Laqueur has said, "of fifty years of study of Russian history, the Russian people, its country, its language."

As an old authority on Russia, Pares had been opposed to the Soviet Government and revised his attitude in view of the Nazi threat. "Towards the end of 1935," his son comments, "my father set foot in Russia once more and any remaining doubts vanished at once. He had not left the Moscow railway station before his mind was flooded with the realisation that the Bolsheviks were, after all, Russia." This only too typical reliance on personal revelation and intuition, inadequately related to the real situation, is surely inappropriate and egocentric—a point worth making when we read similar accounts from more recently revolutionised lands.

TO CROWN IT ALL, there is even a case of Westerners who penetrated to the labour camp areas themselves—Henry Wallace, Vice-President of the USA, with an entourage which included Professor Owen Lattimore, in 1944 visited Magadan, later described by a Soviet poet as a "cold Auschwitz of the north." Lattimore's article in the *National Geographic Magazine* (December 1944) is one of the most extraordinary exhibits to be found.

The NKVD chief Nikishov (described by an inmate as "icily, mercilessly cruel") had recently married the head of the women's camp for the area, Gridassova, of whom the best that can be said is that she did not actually make lampshades out of human skin. These two concealed their official duties by the cunning device of wearing civilian clothes and being called *Mr.* and *Mrs.* for the occasion.

Wallace noted approvingly how Nikishov "gambolled about, enjoying the wonderful air." He saw Gridassova's maternal solicitude, and much admired the needlework which she showed him. The true story of the needlework is that women prisoners capable of producing this were able to sell it for extra rations to the NKVD aristocracy's wives to decorate their apartments. It was normally produced, that is, in conditions comparable with those adversely commented on by Thomas Hood in *The Song of a Shirt* (1843).

Lattimore was equally impressed with "Mr." Nikishov and his wife.

> Mr. Nikishov, the head of Dalstroy, had just been decorated with the Order of Hero of the Soviet Union for his extraordinary achievement. Both he and his wife have a trained and sensitive interest in art and music and a deep sense of civic responsibility.

Lattimore condemned the hardness of the Tsarist system in Siberia. But this had now, fortunately, passed. The Soviet opening-up of the north was "orderly," being controlled by a "remarkable concern, the Dalstroy (Far Northern Construction Company) which can be roughly compared to a combination of the Hudson Bay Company and the TVA." (Dalstroy was, of course, the NKVD's great slave labour organisation for the vast area of North East Siberia under its control.)

Lattimore approvingly quoted another member of their party on a local ballet troupe which provided "high-grade entertainment" which, he added, "just naturally seems to go with gold and so does high-powered executive ability."

Nikishov had indeed shown some of the executive ability Lattimore attributes to him. For the reception had been very well organised. All prisoners in the area were kept in their huts. Watch towers were demolished. Various other deceptions were undertaken. For example, Wallace was shown a farm, the best in the area: fake girl swineherds, who were in fact NKVD staff, replaced the prisoners for the occasion.

The party was actually taken to a gold mine in the Kolyma Valley, the worst area. Lattimore prints a photograph of a group of husky men bearing little resemblance to accounts of the prisoners from current Soviet or other sources. It is captioned *"They have to be strong to withstand winter's rigours."* The comment is a sound one, but when it came to real prisoners it worked out the other way: since they were not expected to withstand the winter's rigours, it was unnecessary to keep them strong.

Readers who want to inoculate themselves against this sort of thing could hardly do better than compare the accounts of the Magadan–Kolyma area given in Lattimore's article (and in Henry Wallace's *Soviet Asia*) with those of

[24] Republished by Methuen as a University Paperback in 1962, without amendment or annotation, so that a version of the Trials no longer presented even in the USSR is readily available to British students.

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General Gorbatov, Evgenia Ginzburg, and Elinor Lipper.

The moral is simple but striking: one can give no serious credit to a word of a story—or even a first-hand observation—picked up in a totalitarian state by a Western sympathiser with the régime in question.

CLEARLY, up to a point, it was the forms and appearances, the phraseology observed by the régime, which deceived Westerners. The literature is crammed with quite ludicrous cases of people unwilling to believe anything bad about "Socialism." But it is also true that outwardly a display not merely of socialism but also of respectability was maintained. There was no Night of the Long Knives, or, rather, the equivalent was kept entirely secret. Properly constituted courts, with people called "judges," dealt with those cases which were permitted to become public knowledge. So we later get the absurd spectacle of the leading judicial figures of the West sitting on the same bench, at Nuremberg, with I. I. Nikitchenko, who had been a judge at the fake Zinoviev Trial with its prepared verdicts. (He has lately been mentioned also in General Gorbatov's memoirs as the man who presided over the ten-minute farce which gave him 15 years in spite of his non-confession.)

Partly because they dressed in trousers, and preserved certain forms and spoke a variant of one of the political dialects of the West, the rulers of Russia were thought to be not so very different from those of modern Britain and America. But Stalin's court, with its buffoons and poisoners, was more like that of an Abbasid or a Sforza than anything that has been seen in London or Washington for centuries, if ever.

The error, which still bedevils ninety per cent of talk and writing about Communist (and certain other) countries reminds one of Condé's famous complaint about historians, that *"ces coquins"* make those they write about behave as they would themselves have done in the same situations. People seem to envisage Stalin, or Yezhov or Mao, as themselves with a few minor *mutatis mutandis*—or if not themselves, then their idea of "Revolutionaries" or "Socialists" or "Ministers."

It is less the terror, as such, than the crudity of Stalinism which seems so hard for Westerners to grasp—the fact, for example, that the leading figures of the Communist party would write obscene and brutal comments on the appeals for mercy of men they knew to be totally innocent.

Both opponents and sympathisers in the West are inclined to think of the Bolsheviks as "dedicated" (or "fanatical") men whose faults or virtues were at any rate not those which Stalin and his associates actually developed. In reality members of a revolutionary party are not simply "idealists" of whatever type: they are a hodgepodge in which the idealist component is accompanied by all sorts of motivations—vanity, power-seeking, and mere freakishness. And a revolutionary party, like any other grouping (and more than most), contains a reserve of disgusting torturers and delators, ready to spring into action if given adequate leadership and a suitable ideology.

BUT ALL THIS WAS, after all, one of the earliest tests of a particular style of credulity; so one should not perhaps press the point too hard as regards individual errors. There have long since been many honourable *mea culpas*. Unfortunately, it is still the case that former dupes, or dupers, continue to justify their line—and even to put themselves forward as reliable interpreters of the current Soviet, or similar, scenes. The state of the public mind when such things are possible clearly leaves much to be desired. And, with the best will in the world, one can scarcely overlook such cases as that of Alexander Werth. For he continues to defend the "fair" (though false) reporting by himself and his friends in the late '40s against the "jaundiced" (though true) accounts of those who took a more critical view. In the *New Statesman* (29 September 1967) he even admitted that he had knowingly, for political reasons, played down the facts of the labour camp system. So if he had apologised, however belatedly, and withdrawn from the field of Soviet affairs to go in for silver fox farming or tree surgery, one might be more lenient. But he hasn't. He continues to pontificate as before in the *Times Literary Supplement*. The standard of *TLS* reviewing of books on Russia has long been notorious, but this is little short of farce.[25]

But, the indestructibility of error in these matters can be found in all sorts of minor oddities—for example, an article by Dr. Martin Ruhemann in a recent (2 November 1967) issue of the *New Scientist*. This is little more than a paean on the pleasures of work at the Kharkov Physics Institute in the 1930s, even though it was unfortunately interrupted by political difficulties. It is worth comparing this with Dr. Weissberg's account of what happened in the

[25] See *Survey* (July 1968) for an account of falsification by omission in the Soviet edition of Mr. Werth's book on Russia, done with the author's collaboration; and for the mutual accusations of false witness between him and the Soviet writer Valentin Kataev.

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Institute, which collapsed with the arrest of all the leading scientists.[26] Dr. Ruhemann was almost alone among them not to be seized, since he was a British citizen. Arthur Koestler, in his introduction to Dr. Weissberg's book, describes trying unsuccessfully to get Ruhemann and his wife to intervene for their arrested colleagues, which they declined to do, even though such Communist scientists as Joliet-Curie at least did that much.

In France they are, predictably, worse. M. André Wurmser admits that Kravchenko's book contained much truth, but still justifies his vicious (and faked) campaign against him. M. Pierre Daix, who hotly denied the existence of the labour camps, was selected to write the preface for the French official edition of Solzhenitsyn! The leading French Communist doctors, who called for the execution of the Moscow "Doctor's Plot" victims as soon as their arrest was announced, were later censured by their own party. But they have not spoken up. It is like lifting a large flat stone.

What one asks of all these people is that they should

> *Speak their bit in public*
> *That some amends be made*

—or, alternatively, cease to put forward their judgments on similar matters.

THESE THINGS ARE worth recalling, not only to show how much falsehood it is possible to get intelligent men to accept and how much atrocity it is possible to conceal from them altogether. The crux is rather that they joined and propagated false conceptions through ignorance (I here omit the conscious liars). They lacked the knowledge of what was possible in a certain type of state. Indeed, it is fair to say that often enough they actively avoided that knowledge.

The possession of that knowledge, the end of that sort of obscurantism, is essential, if we want a realistic assessment of the political history of the past fifty years, and so of our present world.

THE NOTION that the Terror could not be occurring, or only in some justified fashion, was based (in so far as it had an intellectual base) on a set of ideological misunderstandings—such as the sub-Marxist abandonment of all criteria of social morality except the abolition of income from capital. We need not fall into the comparable *simplisme* of seeing the Purge as an inevitable historical result, given the political history of the USSR.

The period is dominated, indeed, by the will of a single man. Stalin's unappeasable drive to absolute power destroyed his opponents, and then his colleagues; it crushed the old Party, replacing it by an organisation in which mutual suspicion had replaced comradeship; it excised the Army command; it decimated the intelligentsia; and it broke society into its component atoms between which no loyalty apart from that directed to the *Vozhd* could make itself known, so that, as Isaak Babel put it,

> Today a man only talks freely with his wife—at night, with the blankets pulled over his head.[27]

But recognising that Stalin was a horrible genius of extreme politics, recognising no limitations, moral, conventional or Marxist, it is also true that he could not have imposed himself if an instrument had not been to hand. For one man to overturn a whole society and polity, an Archimedean lever was required. The Communist Party had long been (as men like Pyatakov saw) a mechanism for imposing on Russia a social organisation for which the country was not, in a Marxist view, ready. It was "based on the principle of coercion." It had separated itself, in practice, from all other classes and interests, and its effective loyalty was primarily to itself and its convictions. Its motive power consisted of ideas in the minds of its controllers—for once an Idealist Conception of History applied.

The principles of popular democracy, of proletarian democracy, and even of intra-party democracy had been successively broken by as early as 1924. If the party was even so not yet a fit instrument for Stalin's rule, it was because there remained the idea that one day, perhaps soon, a relaxation could take place and the Party's departure from Marxism, and alienation from the people, might be brought to an end. At the same time, the very alienation had strengthened within the Party those feelings of group solidarity, of mutual reliance and comradeship to be found in brotherhoods both good and bad. Large sections of it were not yet broken to the idea that all loyalty should be from the bottom up, that there should be no lateral trust at all.

But idolatry of the Party as such, had long resembled the most primitive sort of jingoism. "My party right or wrong" was a phrase of Trotsky's. And by the time Stalin had become the leading figure, through manipulation of the basic party machinery under his control and

[26] Including the great Landau himself, who has told us that he barely escaped death, as "a German spy"—and this superior candour appeared in the Soviet press (*Komsomolskaya Pravda*, July 8, 1965).

[27] Ilya Ehrenburg, *Men, Years and Life*, Vol. IV (1963), p. 195.

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manoeuvre in the Politburo, there were few with the independence of mind not to accept him as the Party incarnate. It is significant that of those few—Syrtsov, Ryutin, A. P. Smirnov, Uglanov, and so on—who attempted to remove him in the period 1930–33, none appeared in court to make confessions. For of course the answer to the statement "all those who appeared in the dock confessed" is that only those trusted to confess did appear in the dock. The others, including Preobrazhensky, Smilga, Yenukidze, Tukachevsky, and so on, were not to be seen. Confession could indeed be obtained from all except an estimated one per cent[28] of the arrested, by torture or the "conveyor." But this would not necessarily stand up in court, after the prisoner had rested and recovered.

With the ones who did adequately confess, among all the pressures of severe interrogation, the use of hostages, and the rest of the NKVD arsenal, there seems no doubt that the tradition of abject falsification in the name of party discipline played a part.[29] All the same, even the public confessions were of very variable quality. Bukharin, for example, confessed in a general way only and denied every specific act charged against him.

Still, one cannot say that Stalinism in all its rigour arose inevitably from the single party state created by Lenin. Stalin (and Trotsky) was doubtless devoted to inflicting further violence on Russia. But there were several occasions when other counsels might have prevailed—in 1929, or again in 1934, and it is even possible (or so the Trotskyites feared) that Lenin himself in his last days was tending, however slightly, towards a more moderate policy.

All the same, Rosa Luxemburg, with astonishing foresight, had seen in 1918 what the results of the abolition of political liberty would be. Without free elections and a free press, Russia would fall into terror, corruption, and the crippling of thought and of popular initiative. It was not perhaps necessary that it should lead to quite the horror of the Stalin epoch, but it was bound to lead, as she said, to "brutalisation" and the crushing of everything vital in public life.

What "Red Rosa" could see is still not clear even to many non-Communists. The other day there were *complaints* from Western students back from discussions at the University of Prague, that the Czech students would not talk about ideological subtleties, and concentrated entirely on the matter of . . . liberty.

The trouble seems to be, *still*, that it is only the experience of loss of liberty which can really teach people. Just as, in 1914, at the beginning of the First World War, it was possible for those ignorant of war to welcome it as a change from the dullness and frustration of the peace—*"like swimmers into cleanness leaping/Out of a world grown old and cold and weary"*; and it was only experience which taught the soldiers that at its worst, with all its faults, the peace was better—

Mocked by hopeless longing to regain,
Bank-holidays, and picture shows, and spats,
And going to the office in the train.

People who, from experience or merely (like Rosa Luxemburg) good sense, understand that whatever the objections to a democratic society, undemocratic alternatives, however impressive on paper, are not just worse, but incomparably and irretrievably worse are right. It is even true that non-ideological, non-totalitarian tyrannies, in which the destruction of law, liberty and truth is likely to be a matter of temporary and partial expediency, are not to be regarded with quite as much revulsion as the Stalin-type polity. They are more easily eroded, and less complete in oppression.[30]

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[28] See *Memoirs of Ivanov Razumnik* (London, 1965), p. 250.

[29] One of the few survivors of the 1952 Slansky Trial in Prague has now given the first full account, by the maker of a public confession at one of the major trials, of the methods employed. He does not, indeed, tell us anything very new about interrogation methods. We have long had full descriptions of how confessions are obtained in the first place, and even the full story by a defendant in one major trial, that of the Polish underground leaders in 1945, from Mr. Stypulkowski.

Stypulkowski was, however, the one accused brought to trial without making full confession. Dr. Eugen Loebl's great contribution is a final clarification of the extraordinarily cynical fashion in which Police, Prosecutor, Judges, and prisoners prepared and rehearsed the whole show as an entirely conscious falsification. See Eugen Loebl and Dusan Pokorny, *Die Revolution rehabilitiert ihre Kinder* (Europa Verlag, Zürich, 1968).

[30] For example, we were often told about the horrors of the Horthy régime in Hungary. After the original White Terror in the early '20s, it seems that the number of Communists executed in Hungary up to the beginning of the Second World War was two. No precise number of the Hungarian Communists who perished in Russia at this period is available. But among the leaders it included ten of the People's Commissars of the 1919 Communist Government. The leading Communist still in Hungary, Matyas Rakosi, was jailed in 1935. The leading Hungarian Communist in Russia, Bela Kun, was executed, after long tortures, in 1939.

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THE PURGE is still very much alive both intrinsically and because it has not yet been abreacted in the USSR. The origins of the present Soviet rulers in the cadres of the terror régime is obviously not a point that can be ignored. But greater insight into their entire position can be obtained by watching current official treatment of the Purge period itself.

The denunciation of Stalinism in Khrushchev's time was scrappy and partial. Yet until the past is frankly faced, we can hardly speak of any substantial and irreversible change in the régime. In Czechoslovakia more has been told in a few months than has come out in Russia in a decade.

Above all, there has as yet been no serious attempt to deal with the Terror as a whole. The great plot ostensibly headed by Trotsky, backed by the Nazis, involving politicians, generals, engineers, doctors, and ordinary citizens by the thousand, has not been explicitly denounced as a fabrication. And this although, as we have seen, statements have been made that demolish the authenticity of some of the main public accusations.

The rehabilitations of the 1956–64 period have a parallel lack of logic. The military victims have been cleared. The executed Stalinists—Rudzutak, Chubar, Postyshev, Eikhe, Kossior and the others—enjoy full honours. Yenukidze and Karakhan, of the secret December 1937 Trial, are now in good odour. But the public victims have been anomalously treated. And rehabilitation, as well as being done in this illogical and partial fashion, has taken a variety of forms. The maximum has been the full-scale article with a least a remark at the end that the man named fell victim to slander as a result of the personality cult. The minimum (now usual) has been simply the mention of the former purgee's name in a neutral or favourable context. There is, indeed, something even more minimal, if one can so express it, than the above. It is now conventional in the "biographical notes" on persons who played a part in the earlier history of the Party and who are listed at the end of works dealing with that time, to give, in addition to dates of birth and death, the date of entering the Party. In the case of all those in good odour, this is phrased "Member of the Party from 1910," or whatever the date may be. In the case of those still unrehabilitated, this is invariably "Got into the Party ("*Sostoyal v partii*") 1910." From this minor convention, it can be seen that, for example, Syrtsov is now, to this degree at least, restored to favour, while Preobrazhensky is not. This curious, and typical, indirectness goes with a general failure to come to grips with the past.

THE GREAT PURGE was a tremendous historical event; a terror almost unexampled in history; a political revolution and social earthquake greater than all the others which had shaken Russia in this century; the foundation of a new state, and system of states. At the same time, the acceptance of massive falsification of its every aspect ate into the consciousness and conscience of the liberal West, a cancer that can only be excised by facing the facts. For it is, of course, *these*—rather than the particular opinions about their significance put forward in this article—which need to be grasped.

ROBERT CONQUEST
THE GREAT TERROR
STALIN'S PURGE OF THE THIRTIES

The first comprehensive study of the Russian purges in the 1930's which reached their public climax in the notorious Confession Trials. This fascinating revelation of Soviet tyranny within their own society is profoundly relevant to today.

MACMILLAN 84s

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LETTERS

Lenin & Guevara

THE ARGUMENTS of David Marquand against the Raymond Williams *May Day Manifesto* and against the New Left generally seem to me to be altogether sound [ENCOUNTER, August]. But spokesmen of the Left, in those rare moments when they have been absolutely candid, have conceded as much! Namely, that the revolutionary programme for "a healthy economy" actually means that *the people will have it worse* ("temporarily" only, of course). And, as a consequence of the real worsening of living conditions, the revolutionary programme for "a fuller democracy" actually means that *people will have fewer, if any, democratic rights.* For, obviously, a new movement which stands for a material decline in the economic and political achievements of the masses can hardly expect either to get the *consent* of the majority (hence a minority putsch for power) or its *popular approval* when in power (hence totalitarian police controls).

This is not theory, but actual practice as formulated by spokesmen of the Old and New Left. The following is from Lenin (*Sochineniia*, Vol. 31, Moscow, 1951, p. 233) and readers will find it quoted in Richard Pipes' *Revolutionary Russia* (Oxford University Press, 1968, p. 340)—

> "When we [the Bolsheviks] established the dictatorship of the proletariat the workers became more hungry, and their standard of living went down. The victory of the workers is impossible without sacrifices, without a temporary worsening of their situation."

The same thesis is presented with equally refreshing honesty by Che Guevara, and the passage from his *Man and Socialism in Cuba* can be found in the recent edition of his collected writings (ed. John Gerassi, pp. 392–3):

> "The vanguard group is ideologically more advanced than the mass; the latter is acquainted with the new values, but insufficiently. While in the former a qualitative change takes place which permits them to make sacrifices as a function of their vanguard character, the latter see only by halves and must be subjected to incentives and pressures of some intensity; it is the dictatorship of the proletariat being exercised not only upon the defeated class but also individually upon the victorious class."

Nothing could be clearer, but why is this not told to the people in advance by those eloquent May Day pamphleteers? We, the masses, who are to make a victorious revolution will not for long be among the winners. Both victors and losers need a "qualitative change" which would enable all of us happily to make "sacrifices." Until we learn to see things not in "halves" but in wholes, we will have to endure a dictatorship exercised over us.

Any guesses as to what the "pressures of some intensity" are likely to be?

B. O'BRIEN

Oxford

"Plateglass Universities"

YOUR May issue of ENCOUNTER magazine has two most interesting articles on British Universities by Messrs. Beloff and Clark. I was particularly encouraged to read these when I saw in the centre of your cover a photograph of the Mathematics and Physics building at the University College of Wales, Aberystwyth, for which my firm were the Architects—Mr. William Marsden of our Shrewsbury office was the partner in charge of this particular building.

While enjoying very much these articles, I was a little disappointed to find no reference whatever to Aberystwyth. Perhaps there is some connection which I have been unable to discover, though certainly a great deal of plateglass is used there!

I. DALE OWEN

Sir Percy Thomas & Son,
Cardiff

WHEN DOES a new university cease to be embryonic? Michael Meloff's (justified) inclusion of Kent and Warwick among the plateglass universities worth discussing [ENCOUNTER, May] implies that universities that are teaching undergraduates, even if they have yet to bring them to graduation, have left that stage. Undergraduate teaching started at Stirling in 1967, presumably several months before the article was written, so its exclusion as embryonic seems odd.

Could the omission have been because Beloff wished to claim (erroneously) that only one vice-chancellor of a new university has more than a nodding acquaintance with thermodynamics?

TOM COTTRELL

Vice-Chancellor, University of Stirling
(formerly Professor of Chemistry, University of Edinburgh)

Stirling, Scotland

I SHALL resist the temptation to defend my exclusion of Stirling on the grounds of a vigorous nationalism. Dr. Cottrell will appreciate that my aim was to analyse the Plateglass Universities in the light of their experiences rather than their hopes. First terms tell few tales.

Given my premise I was not in error about the notable lack of numeracy of Plateglass Vice-Chancellors.

As to the question "When does a new university cease to be embryonic?", the answer is "When it has its first student riot."

MICHAEL BELOFF

London

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Laing & the Death Circuit

AT THE END OF his valuable article, "R. D. Laing and the Death Circuit" [ENCOUNTER, August] David Holbrook asks how it is that Laing finds himself in "some other camp," apart from Melanie Klein, Bowlby, Winnicott, etc. I have been similarly disturbed by the marked difference between the nature of Laing's earlier analytical work and his more recent polemics.

It appears to me that, in order to avoid too precarious an involvement in the chaos he perceives, Laing is impelled to advocate as curative a depersonalising process which answers to his own need and which, precisely because his role has become that of advocate, he insists on with passionate personality. This, in turn, involves the risk of his becoming his admirers since such personality, such infectious passion, is the stuff that cults are made on. Already, as Mr. Holbrook intimates, there are signs of a developing, fashionable Laingology the danger of which (note that much of *The Politics of Experience* was directed at an audience—though not yet the Hornsey students) lies in the fact that a cult can so easily become a situation within which its originator continues to work in a direction pointed by group dictates rather than original perception. Laing, in rationalising his despair into a message of desperate hope, must certainly become as deaf to the findings of many others in the field of psycho-analysis as is the unsympathetic audience of which he is becoming the spokesman.

We must, therefore, be prepared to regard Laing as a popular philosopher whose work as a doctor has decided his role and substantiated his eminence —but whose recent message is more a manifestation of the perspective that Klein and Winnicott seek to alter than the considered voice of an alternative analysis.

JOHN MOLE

Sandridge
Herts

The Roots of Disorientation

By T. R. Fyvel

WHAT SEEMS TO emerge from Melvin Lasky's fascinating eye-witness descriptions of the German student revolt ["Revolution Diary," ENCOUNTER, August] is a curious picture, not so much of political revolt, as of a mass version of that adolescent defiance of elders which most families experience at some stage. A first stage in such defiance is withdrawal of respect. If this is not enough, there follows deliberate, rude aggressiveness, which many parents know to their cost and which Professor Herbert Marcuse also experienced when the uncontrolled young in Berlin decided aggressively to cut the old boy's speech short. For parents, read society.

If psychological defiance was the issue, this also explains why the Frankfurt SDS students were unmoved when Professor Jürgen Habermas, their earlier mentor, said it was "fantasy" to confuse the occupation of university premises with a revolutionary situation in society. After all, as an expression of defiance, smashing in the doors of university offices was satisfying and successful. This view explains also why Professor Richard Lowenthal's Berlin students, while unaware of the identity of the author, applauded a statement by Mussolini he read out to them which called on the young forces in the nation to smash the Old System and release the forces of renewal. A siren call to militant youth not to reform but simply to defy the Old Establishment was, after all, a stock-in-trade of the early Fascists.

If such psychological defiance is an ingredient not only in the German but in the whole international student uprising, explaining its deliberate political extremism, this, I think, is still its lesser aspect. The important point is surely that the uprising happened—that unlike their predecessors, the students of the last two years have felt driven to express violent defiance of an authority and have furthermore felt they could get away with it. This argues for a radical change in the structure of authority opposed to them, or at any rate for a psychological weakening. And here, indeed, one comes upon the obvious change brought by the last two years. Since 1965 the Americans have been unable to cope with the Viet Nam conflict abroad and the Race conflict at home, and it appears that the psychological shock of their dual failure has put all forms of authority in the West into question.

In Europe, especially, the period of American authority which lasted for a generation can now perhaps be seen in truer perspective. In 1939, European society and culture were plainly falling apart from internal strains. Germany and Italy had fallen to barbarian rulers, the British and French governments were busily appeasing the barbarians, the jealous smaller states squabbled helplessly. The subsequent collapse into World War II led to the therapy of a division of Europe between the U.S. and Soviet Union as the super-powers. Perhaps only now is it also plain how much the West relied for two post-war decades upon American leadership. This was much more than U.S. armed power within NATO, behind whose shield an affluent Europe could become the summer playground of the young. U.S. support assured the peace of West Berlin and at the same time of Israel; U.S. economic and military strength provided an answer to Soviet missiles, and at the same time provided wheat for the masses of India and aid in general

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for the Third World; U.S. institutions doled out grants for research and U.S. universities took in European academics; behind most Western endeavours, in fact, there stood support in the shape of the dynamic, democratic optimism of the U.S. It is instructive to note how until recently such reliance upon the Americans prevailed. In conversations with young West German intellectuals in 1965, I found their minds still full of President Kennedy's gesture in calling from a Berlin balcony, as he stood alongside Willy Brandt, *"Ich bin ein Berliner"*; his assassination was taken as a special German tragedy.

Two events, then, in the last two years have brought about the astonishing American decline. In Viet Nam, not only has the mechanised might of the U.S. failed to crush a peasant guerrilla army; diplomatically the White House, and the Pentagon, and the sociologists from Michigan State, have presented a clumsy spectacle of failing to extricate themselves from the trap. At the same time, at home, American society has strikingly failed to cope with the urban ghettos, Negro race conflicts and the whole dark shadow across the American dream. Why can't a nation with an annual GNP of $900,000 million build enough houses and schools and so on? Political experts who know the political barriers know why: to the international young, it seems like a character defect of American society.

However, a third factor which may be even more important is that through these failures, the American mood has suffered a profound change. A few years ago they could see themselves as the self-confident, generous leaders of the West. Today they are floundering at home and abroad, without a sense of purpose, unsure whether or where to start reform, temporarily reduced in fact to the status of any other fallible power, like Britain, France or India, which is precluded by its own problems from having much influence upon those of others. The crucial difference, however, is that to the extent that other countries relied upon the U.S. and that American life represented their own future, the West is today leaderless, in some ways wildly disoriented, and all Western institutions have lost in authority. The young of today have been given a sense of this disorientation and have reacted.

This may be most apparent in Western Germany where I think one can now see how much the post-war authority of the Federal rulers in Bonn (and of Willy Brandt in Berlin) was buttressed by the fact that behind them stood the U.S. as a powerful and ever-generous friend in need, a great allied nation with many flaws, naturally, but basically optimistic in its democratic faith. Herr Strauss and other German Rightists who fought to diminish this influence may today realise that under this American tie-up the Federal Republic had legitimacy, a certain recognisable shape and international existence which transcended its own standing. Without it, what is the moral authority over a truncated Germany of the coalition government in Bonn, and what the authority of the stuffy German universities? On their own, evidently little. Suddenly they can seem like transient post-war constructions which can therefore be superseded. Why not remake them entirely anew, ask the German students—especially as from Berkeley, Columbia and Madison they get the message that American institutions themselves are increasingly put into question.

This loss of American self-confidence has produced varying echoes in many countries. In Britain, the lack of an American lead has led to the present dull, depressed vacuum in political affairs, against which some students have tried to stand out. It may be ironically satisfying to note how through the American decline, President de Gaulle has also been involved in problems of being defied. In spite of all his anti-American acts and utterances, when it came to it in May, the young French students, all the university reformers, anti-Viet Nam protesters, the red-flag carriers, the Mao-ists and Anarchists put him in the same camp as Lyndon Johnson; the moral authority of his government was defied as no longer existent, while he himself, by raising the Communist bogey, reacted like any American Right-wing Radical defending the past. Satisfaction over de Gaulle's discomfiture does not, however, solve the problem, felt in different ways in West Germany and Britain—how, without a revival of American self-confidence and an American lead, is the authority of existing institutions to be maintained? Or how to deal with the increasing numbers of the young whose defiance reflects the sense that, in view of the current American abdication, the West is in disorientation and to some extent in a state of psychological shock? Still no answers, but for Mr. Theodore Draper ["World Politics: A New Era?", Encounter, August], more questions.

Herostratus & Weightman

Someone has just brought my attention to an article written by a man called Weightman about my film *Herostratus* in the June issue of your magazine.

It is not simply wrong on details, it is wrong on almost every question of fact. As an act of misrepresentation it almost ranks as a work of genius, and this we would find very funny except that it parades as self-righteous criticism in a journal that takes itself seriously.

You cannot publish criticism by men who know nothing about the art-form they write about. It is like setting George Brown to review Stockhausen, or like condemning the Sistine Chapel as a "very poor stamp collection." It is the prevalence of this real lack of knowledge in film criticism that has helped make the Europeans hold our "serious" cinema in such contempt. For it is the dedicated, perceptive critic who helps make this end of cinema live. He is the essential point of contact between the audience and artist. The ordinary commercial cinema is totally unaffected by criticism. The vision

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of dozens of serious people turning their finely tuned talents on to *The Sound of Music* or *Thoroughly Modern Millie* is highly ridiculous.

I am willing to write you an article explaining what this film is about, if you have no one fit to do it. I realise even as I offer it, that this involves the assumption that the words of the artist may even be of more interest than that of an amateur journalist. I apologise for this, but we are all getting a little impatient, and we don't see the necessity of having to go to Europe or America to be allowed to do this kind of work.

By the way, is Weightman a very old man? He writes like a Royal Academician.

DR. DONALD A. LEVY

Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts,
Harvard University
Cambridge, Mass.

I LOOK FORWARD to reading Dr. Levy's refutation of my criticisms. But it is unkind of him—and indeed unperceptive—to suggest that I might be a Royal Academician. I am, like himself, a teacher at a provincial university where we take art seriously.

JOHN WEIGHTMAN

London

Shonfield & Forster's India

NOW THAT J. K. Galbraith has added, in "James Mill's India" [ENCOUNTER, March] his testimony to Forster's novel as essential reading on the subject, may I say how much I enjoyed Andrew Shonfield's earlier article on "The Politics of Forster's India" [ENCOUNTER, January]? The critical correspondence which Mr. Shonfield's analysis attracted has, indeed, confirmed my feeling that he had filled a gap in the otherwise voluminous attention that has been paid to *A Passage to India.*

No doubt it is the prior fascination of the "religion of personal relations," the cosmic overtones and, of course, the marvellous craftiness of the writing that have hitherto deterred critics from any attempt to be explicit in regard to the political significance of a fictional masterpiece. In this context Professor Nelson's indignation [ENCOUNTER, June] at the intrusion of politics upon the higher literary categories is as eloquent as Mr. Das' view that Mr. Forster's novel came closer than Mr. Shonfield's article to "the reality of the political situation." For though one can argue (and it is strange that it hasn't been done before) about Forster's own relegation of political interest to a secondary, or tertiary, or lower place, the fact remains that he was not creating a passage to (say) Mexico, nor was he a French or American writer creating a passage to India. At some level the political content of an individual Englishman's relationship to an Indian theme is surely inescapable, and surely worth thinking about. But so well had the tracks been covered (as it were) that I had long pondered the matter without appreciating what Mr. Shonfield made so plain, the concentration upon Muslim characters and attitudes. One would have thought (from *The Hill of Devi,* for instance) that Forster's experience and sensibilities were precisely of the kind which could create something out of the Hindu "mess and profusion and confusion." Was he, perhaps, *too* sensitive in this respect? Was there something in the Hindu impact which he found too intimate, not just too difficult, to expose? One knows that core of reticence. Indeed I am writing, knowing that he will not join the debate, as though he were not here to do so.

I suppose I should declare a "personal interest," in having followed Forster and the late J. R. Ackerley in a pre-war sojourn among the small States of Western India. Later, at the end of the war, I met Forster in the significant environment of a P.E.N. Congress at Jaipur, where Indian writers in English queued up to do him honour and offer him their *MSS.* The professional value of his endorsements of Mulk Raj Anand, Ahmed Ali and others had become inseparable from his reputation in India as a friend, and even a champion of nationalism. And yet the only overt reference to the subject in *A Passage to India* expresses revulsion from the commonplace irrelevance of a nation-state which was the goal of the political movement.

WHATEVER MAY BE said of the aesthetic intention, the political *effect* of the novel remains extraordinary, and eminently worth Mr. Shonfield's examination. No doubt it is chiefly explicable by Forster's response, in his treatment of personal relations, to the overlooked element of individual frustration. The exposure of the galling secrets of racist sexuality, the European club background, and the excitement of the trial scene, could play in various ways upon the nerve of Indian nationalism. But this is where a question still sticks in my mind. I had no direct experience of India before 1938, but I have never been quite able to believe that a trial ever was, or could be, conducted as Forster describes it.

Can anyone throw a clear light on this not unimportant point?

FRANCIS WATSON

London

Dropping a Brick

TO SAY THAT England has not yet proved herself a "good European" is one thing, but to ban her geographically from Europe is a brick which General de Gaulle himself would not dare drop. Well, you did: "Anna Kavan was born in France, educated in Europe *and* in England..." (ENCOUNTER, July, p. 45). So Victorian! Or is it just a semantic subtlety bound to escape a "European"? *Mea culpa.*

ARIEL R. C. DAIGRE

London

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AUTHORS

Walter Kaufmann's article, with facsimiles of the letters, will appear in the revised and enlarged edition of his *Nietzsche*, to be published in the fall of 1968 by Princeton University Press (and in a Vintage Books paperback edition by Random House)....

James Morris is a regular contributor to ENCOUNTER and his most recent articles were "Letter from Cranbury, N.J." (December 1967) and "Araby Betrayed" (February 1968). His present essay forms a chapter in his new book, *Pax Britannica*, which will shortly be published by Faber & Faber (50s.). Among his other books are *Oxford* (1965), *The Presence of Spain* (1964), and *Venice* (1960)....

Nigel Dennis' poem, "The Pretty Drum and the Jolly Drumstick," is based on the translation from the cuneiform by S. N. Kramer in *History Begins At Sumer* (Thames & Hudson, 40s.)....

James Wellard *writes of himself*: "...Regard myself as half an academic, half a layman, or 'outsider,' since my career has been equally divided between the schools and the world of literature.... Have been a professor in England, the United States, and Iran; and a journalist, war correspondent, and novelist elsewhere.... Travels in the Sahara led to a certain specialisation in Rock Art and thence to the suspicion that the experts—in this field as in others—were claiming a monopoly on their particular branch of art or science and silencing the rest of us with a great deal of learned mumbo-jumbo. Hence my question whether this 'academic fetishism' is not typical of modern culture as a whole.... Am 59, have a B.A. from the University of London, a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, and have written 16 books, 12 of them novels...."

André Malraux' *Antimemoirs*, discussed by "R" in the January issue and by Anthony Hartley in the June issue of ENCOUNTER, has just been published by Hamish Hamilton at 50s., together with new editions of Malraux' *Days of Hope* (35s.) and *Man's Estate* (30s.)....

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London

We can do no more than express our grief at what has happened to the people of Czechoslovakia and our sympathy with those writers and intellectuals who have spoken so bravely on their behalf.

We hope that the anger we feel at our helplessness to do more is shared by the writers and intellectuals of the countries whose armies have invaded the territory of their neighbour.—

Dan Jacobson, John Gross, Ian Hamilton, Richard Hoggart, W. L. Webb, Angus Wilson, John Arden, Margaret D'Arcy, Kingsley Amis, Anthony Burgess, Francis Hope, Elizabeth Jane Howard, David Sylvester, Julian Symons, Anthony Thwaite, Diana and Lionel Trilling, David Marquand, J. G. Weightman, Rebecca West. THE GUARDIAN

London

Among the "letters from the revolutionary masses" in the Chungshan University (Canton) Red Flag, there was one from the Library staff. They reported that the tendency of reading "literary works" was reaching alarming proportions. One student had borrowed 72 books from the library in seven weeks. Obviously these eager readers were turning their backs on the political realities pressed upon them by Chairman Mao.

Indeed, the letter complained that this unhealthy addiction to literature was concentrated on the bourgeois writers of other countries or Soviet revisionists—no one can be quite sure in China today which of these categories is the most damning. Chinese classic novels such as Dream of the Red Chamber, Water Margin, Romance of Three Kingdoms were much in demand. The works of Pa Chin (a writer popular in the '30s and '40s lately under public attack for his bourgeois origins and outlook) were scarcely ever to be found on the shelves. What was worse, complained the revolutionary librarians, Le Rouge et le Noir, the Decameron, and other similar works of licentious content were often asked for. THE TIMES

Delhi/Kathmandu

The Nepalese Embassy in Delhi gave no visas to hippies about a year ago for a few months, when lost pieces of Buddhist statues (it appears) turned up in a hippy shrine. But the government has obviously relented, and, after the initial shock, an extremely gentle Nepalese consul-type piled literature on to us describing among other things the not often seen "narrow gauze railway." He kept up his English by reading 1939 copies of the London Mercury. . . .

Kathmandu goes a long way to being as good as is reported. It is the capital, and though a post office and the few cars it has have not spoilt the mediaeval look of the rough lanes and the intricately carved overhanging houses and statues, the Nepalese want it like that. Many of the beautiful people, seeing it go the Western way, have left for Laos. I believe they started a hippy food house, with coloured lights and whirling umbrellas, coloured paper ones. I stayed, took shelter from torrential rain, in the rather conservative Capm Hotel where the legend about completely free smoking was dispelled by the sign: "No taking of hasheesh, pot, speed or what have we."

INTERNATIONAL TIMES

London

Three judges failed in an impromptu "test" in the Appeal Court yesterday to give the legal meaning of the words "deprave and corrupt" as opposed to their common usage.

The question on the ordinary meaning of the words was put to them by Mr. John Mortimer, Q.C., appearing for the publishers of the book, Last Exit to Brooklyn, who are appealing against a finding by an Old Bailey jury that the work was obscene.

Mr. Mortimer, who is also a playwright, argued that a book could not be found to be obscene unless it tended to "deprave or corrupt" the reader.

After an exchange of questions and answers between Mr. Mortimer and the three judges, Lord Justice Salmon, Mr. Justice Geoffrey Lane and Mr. Justice Fisher, the judges confessed, at that stage of the case, that they were left puzzled over the law's interpretation of the words "deprave and corrupt."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

"At its best," writes Leslie Sellers in his new book Doing It In Style, about the language of newspapers, "popular newspaper writing is a model of crispness, clarity, conciseness and immense readability."

He welcomes Americanisms. Who bars "teenagers" now? And who still calls a commuter a season-ticket holder (which he isn't necessarily, anyway)? He is against headlines which Ban, Bid, Cut, Dash, Probe, Quit, Quiz, Rap, Rush or Slash.

Puns, sparingly, are fine. One Man Banned would get by him. So would Superloo, for the new 6d. lavatories at Waterloo Station. And if you would know something of our pitfalls, there is a chapter on double meanings—"French Push Bottles up German Rear." There are clean ones, too—"MacArthur Flies Back to Front."

From his "Do's and Don'ts" chapter:

Do take great care with superlatives. Somebody, somewhere, will challenge it.

Do try to keep up the tone of a story so that the reader is not unnecessarily shocked or nauseated.

Do avoid euphemisms like toilets and dentures.

Don't use "well-known." If he's not, it's a lie. If he is, it's unnecessary.

Don't mix metaphors, especially jargon metaphors about ironing out bottlenecks.

DAILY MAIL

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